

Eastern Aristocracies and Imperial Courts

Constantine's Half-Brother, Licinius's Prefect, and Egyptian Grain

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Julian was the last of the Constantinian emperors. When he was promoted as a caesar, a junior emperor, in 355, the succession of Constantinian emperors had already lasted more than sixty years, which was longer than the earlier noteworthy dynasties of the Julio-Claudian emperors after Augustus, the Flavian emperors, and the Severan emperors. Despite this heritage, Julian's path to emperorship had not been straightforward. Though he was only about thirty years old when he finally emerged as sole emperor, he had already survived a massacre of his relatives; an extended exile in remote Cappadocia; the suspicions arising from association with his reckless half-brother Gallus; ferocious military campaigns in Gaul; and the meddling of officials loyal to his cousin, the emperor Constantius II. He had also been fortunate to elude a civil war. In 360 his army in Gaul hailed him as an augustus, a senior emperor, in defiance of Constantius, and the two emperors were already marching toward a confrontation when Constantius died in November 361. Julian's sole emperorship was quite unexpected.

Julian would be the first emperor born in Constantinople, Constantine's namesake capital dedicated in 330,¹ and his ancestors and relatives included

numerous emperors. He was a great-grandson of Maximian; a grandson of Constantius I; a nephew of Constantine and Licinius; a cousin and brother-in-law of Constantine II, Constantius II, and Constans; a cousin of Flavius Julius Dalmatius and Nepotianus; and a half-brother of Gallus. Julian had the most impressive imperial pedigree of any Roman emperor yet. The only credential missing from his bloodline was an imperial father.

Julian's father was Julius Constantius, a half-brother of Constantine, and his mother was Basilina, the daughter of Julius Julianus. Julian might have once imagined how deeply his mother had loved him,² but he could not have had any personal memories. His mother had died a few months after giving birth,³ and his father had been assassinated in 337. His parents' marriage nevertheless underscored his ambivalent standing within the Constantinian family. Although his father had been killed for having been seen as a threat to the succession of Constantine's sons, Julian eventually could become a successor to the last of those sons because his mother's family had been considered important for the advancement of the Constantinian dynasty.

The marriages of his half-siblings had reflected Constantine's own political calculations. His goals

1 Ammianus Marcellinus, *Res gestae* 25.5.1, Julian's death on 26 June 363; 25.3.23, death "in the thirty-second year of his life." In late 362 Julian described himself as a Christian "up to twenty years" and then a traveler "with the gods" for twelve years: Julian, *Ep.* 47.434D. Supposedly Julian had celebrated his birthday at games outside Ctesiphon shortly before his death: *Anthologia graeca* 14.148.

2 Libanius, *Orat.* 1.125, "he [Julian] said that I [Libanius] loved only him, and that not even his mother would have surpassed my affection."

3 Julian, *Misopogon* 352B.

for their marriages included an alliance with the rival emperor Licinius and connections with senatorial families at Rome. In contrast, the marriage between Julius Constantius and Basilina seemed to promise no obvious political expediency. Her father was not a senator at Rome, and although he had held the high office of praetorian prefect, he had served under Licinius, not Constantine. In addition, the marriage took place not during Licinius's reign, when a link to a rival's prefect might have seemed advantageous, but after the execution of Licinius. As Licinius's long-serving prefect Julius Julianus might have seemed destined for the same deadly fate.

On the surface Julius Julianus, his daughter, and his family would not have been attractive candidates for integration with the Constantinian family. Evaluating the allure of this marriage requires consideration of the marital alliances of Constantine's other half-siblings and his own children (section 1) and the role of praetorian prefects as patrons (section 2). But interpreting the politics of the marriage also requires consideration of larger issues. Constantine was presumably looking past Julius Julianus's service to Licinius toward more important concerns, such as the supply of Egyptian grain to Rome (section 3) and the formation of an effective administration in the eastern provinces (section 4). Even though Constantine would obliterate the Licinian imperial dynasty, he still needed to tap into the Licinian network of supporters in the East. The patronage of Julius Julianus provided a link. Decades later that network would still be available to support Julian (section 5).

Scholarship on Constantine has greatly contributed to the impressive expansion of late antique studies, and by now many aspects of his reign have been examined repeatedly. This study highlights some underutilized aspects, such as the exogamous marriages of a half-brother, the unexpected linkage between the family of a praetorian prefect and the imperial dynasty, the burden of supplying grain to Rome, and the transfer of the allegiance of eastern provincial notables from Licinius to Constantine. It also introduces some new evidence, such as papyri describing the distribution of Egyptian grain. Its most important innovation, however, is the construction of a new interpretive perspective. Many studies of Constantine focus on the religious beliefs of the emperor. But because his support for Christianity was not the only novelty of his

reign, Constantinian studies would benefit from new paradigms. This study proposes a comprehensive interpretive pattern linking dynastic marriages, influential prefects, the food supply of Rome and the army, and the recruitment of notables from the eastern provinces to the imperial administration. Complementing these connections is an argument about the lasting influence of Constantine's supporters, whose descendants later became Julian's supporters.

1. Julius Constantius and Constantine's Half-Siblings

Constantine was born most likely in the early or mid-270s;⁴ his parents were Constantius I and Helena. Subsequently, sometime before 289,⁵ his father married Theodora, a daughter of the emperor Maximian, and they had at least six children, whose exact ages are unknown. Also unknown is the correct sequence of their births. One son, Hannibalianus, seems to have died before adulthood; the children who survived included two sons, Flavius Dalmatius and Julius Constantius, and three daughters, Constantia, Eutropia, and Anastasia.

Demographically, the family of Constantius was somewhat atypical. This was a large family. Census returns in Roman Egypt indicate that the average household, including many nuclear families, consisted of only four or five members. This family also included several sons. Except during outbreaks of the plague in the later second century and again in the third century, the total population of the empire was most likely stable, probably expanding at only a very low rate. In this almost stationary population about forty percent of families had no natural heir or only daughters. High mortality rates implied that some families did not reproduce into the next generation, and that many families did not have sons who reached adulthood.⁶

4 T. D. Barnes, *The New Empire of Diocletian and Constantine* (Cambridge, MA, 1982), 39–41.

5 On the assumption that the *adfnitas* with Maximian mentioned in *Panegyrici latini* 10(2).11.4 referred to this marriage; this panegyric was delivered in April 289; see C. E. V. Nixon and B. S. Rodgers, *In Praise of Later Roman Emperors: The Panegyrici Latini; Introduction, Translation, and Historical Commentary with the Latin Text of R. A. B. Mynors*, *The Transformation of the Classical Heritage* 21 (Berkeley, 1994), 42–43.

6 B. W. Frier, "Demography," in *CAH*, 2nd ed., vol. 11, *The High Empire, A.D. 70–192*, ed. A. K. Bowman, P. Garnsey, and D. Rathbone

Even many senatorial families disappeared after one or two generations.⁷

Imperial families followed similar patterns. Although hereditary succession was anticipated from the beginning, many emperors, starting with Augustus, had no sons, and no early imperial dynasty surpassed three generations of fathers and sons.⁸ The constraints of high mortality meant that even the birth of multiple sons was no guarantee of succession. Although Marcus Aurelius's fourteen (or more) children included seven sons, only one, Commodus, survived boyhood to succeed his father as a teenager.

At the same time the availability of more than one adult son posed its own problems for imperial succession. Ancient precedents were dispiriting. The conflicts between Titus and Domitian, and later between Caracalla and Geta, were legendary, and late antique historians remembered these pairs of brothers as dysfunctional rivals.⁹ The most recent example of succession by two sons offered a more promising precedent. In 282 Carus initiated a new imperial dynasty by elevating both of his sons as caesars; after their father's death, they briefly coexisted as emperors in opposite halves of the empire.

The many sons of Constantius likewise seemed to offer the prospect of a new imperial dynasty. Even though the selections of new emperors under the Tetrarchy, the consortium of four concurrent emperors, had downplayed dynastic succession, all the Tetrarchic emperors who had sons apparently anticipated the return of hereditary succession.¹⁰ Galerius,

for instance, was even thought to have been scheming about the eventual promotion of his son, who was still a young boy at the time.¹¹ Constantius's four sons could hence be seen as a hindrance to the ambitions of the other emperors, because his sons alone could have formed a true fraternal Tetrarchy. But these sons might also have been a challenge to each other's ambitions.

In July 306, Constantius's sons and daughters were present in York, supposedly standing in a circle around his deathbed "like a chorus." From this family vigil, however, Constantine alone emerged wearing their father's purple cloak.¹² By then he was in his early thirties, while his oldest half-siblings were probably still teenagers or in their early twenties. A favorable interpretation insisted that Constantine had inherited his father's emperorship through seniority, which was a "law of nature."¹³ A hostile account hinted at a military takeover by claiming that the soldiers had rejected Constantius's "legitimate sons" as incapable.¹⁴ Both supporters and opponents seemed to think that the peculiarity of Constantine's sole succession needed an explanation.

Constantine's accession had indeed been a coup—against his own half-brothers. Julius Constantius and Flavius Dalmatius were apparently the first imperial sons who reached adulthood but did not become emperors.¹⁵ During the early years of his reign Constantine had to confront not only hostility from fellow emperors but also the possibility of conspiracies centered around his half-brothers. Julius Constantius, for instance, was even thought to have been more suitable for imperial rule.¹⁶ The murkiness of the circumstances of Constantine's accession was a lingering shadow over the dynamics within his family.

(Cambridge, 2000), 791–94, high mortality; 805, growth rate; 807, household size, stationary population; 813–16, population growth, plague.

7 K. Hopkins and G. Burton, "Ambition and Withdrawal: The Senatorial Aristocracy under the Emperors," in K. Hopkins, *Death and Renewal: Sociological Studies in Roman History* (Cambridge, 1983), 134–46, on the failure of senatorial families to become a hereditary aristocracy.

8 Most recently, the odd case of three generations as emperors simultaneously: Valerian (253–260), his son Gallienus (253–268), and Gallienus's sons Valerian II (256–258) and Saloninus (258–260).

9 Aurelius Victor, *De Caesaribus* 11.1, 20.32.

10 Orosius, *Historiae adversum paganos* 7.28.14, preference under Tetrarchy for "new men" over "sons of emperors"; O. Hekster, *Emperors and Ancestors: Roman Rulers and the Constraints of Tradition*, Oxford Studies in Ancient Culture and Representation (Oxford, 2015), 287–314, on opposition to nondynastic succession under the Tetrarchs; I. Tantillo, "Come un bene ereditario": Costantino

e la retorica dell'impero-patrimonio," *Antiquité Tardive* 6 (1998): 251–64, on the idea of the empire as a family patrimony under Constantine.

11 Lactantius, *De mortibus persecutorum* 20.4.

12 Eusebius, *Vita Constantini* 1.21.2–22.1.

13 Eusebius, *Vita Constantini* 1.21.2; also *Panegyrici latini* 6(7).4.2, "first son."

14 Zosimus, *Historia nova* 2.9.1.

15 Other possible examples: Valerianus, consul in 265, brother of Gallienus and presumably a son of Valerian: *PLRE* 1:939, "(Licinius) Valerianus 14"; and Marinianus, consul in 268, if he was a son of Gallienus: *PLRE* 1:559, "Marinianus 1."

16 Libanius, *Orat.* 18.8, although in a laudatory oration for Julian.

The options for his half-brothers were limited. One was execution. Other emperors had carefully exterminated not only men and boys from rival imperial families, but also women who might confer imperial potential through marriage. The emperor Licinius, for instance, hunted down Maximinus's son and daughter, Severus's son, Galerius's son, and Diocletian's widow and daughter.¹⁷ Constantine himself would eventually eliminate his father-in-law Maximian; his brothers-in-law Maxentius, Bassianus, and Licinius; and his nephew, Licinius's son; and he would be responsible for the deaths of his son Crispus and his wife Fausta. Decades later Julian could characterize his uncle, with justification, as a murderer, stained with "the blood of relatives."¹⁸

Another option was exile. Whether willingly or under duress, Constantine's half-brothers kept a low profile by effectively banishing themselves to provincial cities. Initially they lived in Toulouse, in southern Gaul, far from any contact with troops on the frontiers. Flavius Dalmatius had at least two sons, who were students in Narbonne.¹⁹ Julius Constantius was later remembered as a wanderer, "like Odysseus."²⁰ He apparently moved to Italy, presumably after Constantine's invasion, and he married Galla, a member of a distinguished family from Rome.²¹ Their children included the future emperor Gallus, as well as an older son and a daughter. But otherwise the half-brothers seem to have remained out of direct participation in imperial politics.²²

Yet another option was to assist Constantine by forming alliances with important families. This was

the role imposed on his half-sisters, who were at the center of imperial politics already in the early years of his reign. In early 313 Constantia married the emperor Licinius. In the previous year Constantine had invaded Italy and eliminated the rival emperor Maxentius at Rome; during his journey back to the Rhine frontier he attended the wedding at Milan. Constantia and Licinius soon had a son, also named Licinius, born in the summer of 315.²³ Anastasia married Bassianus, who was probably a member of a senatorial family at Rome.²⁴ In 316 Constantine proposed Bassianus as a potential junior emperor in Italy. Eutropia's husband was probably Virius Nepotianus, a member of a distinguished senatorial family at Rome.²⁵ In Constantine's political schemes, the marriage of one half-sister formed a bond with a rival emperor, and the marriages of the other half-sisters (and of his half-brother Julius Constantius) with the senatorial aristocracy at Rome.

For Licinius and Bassianus, however, becoming Constantine's brothers-in-law was a death sentence, and their wives were fated to early widowhood. The widows then disappeared from involvement in imperial politics. Anastasia seems not to have remarried, and she may have retired eventually to Constantinople, where she apparently funded the construction of a bathhouse.²⁶ Constantia likewise did not remarry, and she seems to have retired to Palestine.²⁷

17 Lactantius, *De mortibus persecutorum* 50–51.

18 Julian, *Caesares* 336a–b.

19 Ausonius, *Professores* 16.11–12, "Constantine's brothers" in Toulouse; 17.8–11, Dalmatius's sons.

20 Julian, *Fragmenta breviora* 3 = Libanius, *Orat.* 14.30.

21 For speculation about her family and ancestors, including the possibility of a connection with the Severan imperial dynasty, see F. Chausson, *Stemmata aurea: Constantin, Justine, Théodose; Revendications généalogiques et idéologie impériale au IV^e siècle ap. J.-C.* (Rome, 2007), 123–25.

22 In 316 Constantine sent an envoy named Constantius to negotiate with Licinius (*Origo Constantini imperatoris* 5.14). If this envoy was Julius Constantius, then he would most likely have met the prefect Julius Julianus at Licinius's court and perhaps also have seen the young Basilina for the first time. Another possibility is to identify this envoy as Flavius Constantius, who later served as Constantine's praetorian prefect (see section 4).

23 Licinius II was almost twenty months old when he was proclaimed a caesar on 1 March 317: *Epitome de Caesaribus* 41.4; Zosimus, *Historia nova* 2.20.2.

24 *PLRE* 1:150, "Bassianus 1"; for speculation about Bassianus's "éminente famille italienne," see Chausson, *Stemmata aurea*, 127–29.

25 *PLRE* 1:625, "Virius Nepotianus 7," with Chausson, *Stemmata aurea*, 129–33, speculation about Virius Nepotianus's family; 145, possibility that Eutropia instead married a brother of Virius Nepotianus.

26 Ammianus Marcellinus, *Res gestae* 26.6.14, mentioning "the baths of Anastasia, named after the sister of Constantine"; for possible descendants, see Chausson, *Stemmata aurea*, 137–41.

27 The city of Maiuma in Palestine acquired "the superior name of the emperor's pious sister": Eusebius, *Vita Constantini* 4.38; also Socrates, *HE* 1.18.3, with discussion in R. Van Dam, *The Roman Revolution of Constantine* (Cambridge, 2007), 114–15, and N. Lenski, "Empresses in the Holy Land: The Creation of a Christian Utopia in Late Antique Palestine," in *Travel, Communication, and Geography in Late Antiquity*, ed. L. Ellis and F. L. Kidner (Aldershot, 2004), 113–24, for the general tendency of widowed or estranged imperial women to retire to Palestine.

Instead, after his victory over Licinius in 324, Constantine concentrated on promoting his own sons. Crispus, his oldest son (from an earlier marriage), was in his mid- or late twenties, and during the war against Licinius he had commanded a fleet. He also already was married and had a child. To reinforce a political alliance, in 307 Constantine himself had married Fausta, another daughter of the emperor Maximian, and they had had at least five children, including three sons. Their first son was Constantine II, born in 316. In March 317 Crispus and Constantine II had each been proclaimed a caesar (even though Constantine II was still less than one year old). Constantius II was proclaimed as a third caesar in November 324, when he was six or seven years old. By then Constantine also had another son, Constans, who was still an infant or a very young boy.

The situation of these four sons had the potential to repeat the earlier outcome of Constantine and his half-brothers. One of the sons was markedly older and had a different mother. In 326, however, a bloody culling would clarify the future succession. The mysterious execution of Crispus abruptly removed the risk that he might eventually exclude his half-brothers from emperors by imitating his father's sole succession.²⁸ This was essentially a coup against the oldest son. Now the succession could be focused on Constantine's three surviving sons.

This clarification of the future for Constantine's sons opened up yet another option for his half-brothers. As his half-sisters disappeared from political affairs, Constantine seems to have felt comfortable enough to allow Julius Constantius and Flavius Dalmatius to emerge from obscurity. Gallus was born in Etruria in 325 or 326.²⁹ His birthplace might imply that his father, Julius Constantius, was residing in central Italy. Both half-brothers were now awarded offices and higher status. In the summer of 326 they may have accompanied Constantine on a visit to Rome.³⁰ Flavius Dalmatius received an ordinary consulship in 333 and

apparently served as a military commander in Cilicia and Syria. Julius Constantius received an ordinary consulship in 335.

Within his immediate and extended family Constantine would typically establish priorities through the marriages of his own sons and daughters to the children of his half-brothers. His children with Fausta started becoming old enough to marry during the 330s. His son Constantius II married the (anonymous) daughter of Julius Constantius and Galla, and his daughter Constantina married Hannibalianus, a son of Flavius Dalmatius.³¹ This pattern continued even after Constantine's death, as Constantina's second husband was Gallus, a son of Julius Constantius and Galla, and Helena married Julian. In the generation of Constantine's sons, daughters, nephews, and nieces, the marriages of the family dynasty typically looked inward rather than outward. Their marriages were not expansive, intended to link with other prominent families, but rather restrictive, designed to tie the collateral lines back together. These consanguineous marriages between close cousins implied that imperial succession would be limited to members of a Constantinian family that was clearly distinct from other aristocratic families.

As an imperial son who did not become an emperor, Julius Constantius had survived by acting like his sisters, whose marriages had contributed to Constantine's networking. Eventually he married again. His first wife, Galla, had perhaps died after giving birth to Gallus, because sometime in the later 320s or very early 330s he married Basilina. Although this marriage presumably represented another utilitarian alliance on his brother's behalf, in the context of the later years of Constantine's reign it was distinctly unusual. In contrast to the concurrent endogamous marriages of Constantine's children, the marriage of Julius Constantius was exogamous, designed to form a political connection with another family. It was even more idiosyncratic because his new wife's family was neither imperial nor senatorial. Instead, this marriage linked Constantine's family with the family of a praetorian prefect.

28 L. Ramskold, "Constantine's Vicennalia and the Death of Crispus," in *Niš and Byzantium XI: Symposium Niš 3–5 June 2012; The Collection of Scientific Works*, ed. M. Rakocija (Niš, 2013), 409–56, at 429, dating Crispus's death to late July 326.

29 Ammianus Marcellinus, *Res gestae* 14.11.27: Gallus was killed in 354 "in the twenty-ninth year of his life."

30 Libanius, *Orat.* 19.19: supposedly Constantine once consulted with his half-brothers about how to react to insults at Rome.

31 Helena, Crispus's wife, may also have been a cousin: *CTH* 9.38.1, with Chausson, *Stemmata aurea* (n. 21 above), 110, 121–22.

2. Julius Julianus and Praetorian Prefects

Basilina's father, Julius Julianus, had served as praetorian prefect under the emperor Licinius from 315 until 324.³² Long service was also characteristic of prefects who served under Constantine. Junius Bassus was a prefect for fourteen years, probably in two separate tenures, between 317 and 335.³³ Evagrius and Valerius Maximus served continuously (or in a series of almost continuous appointments) for a decade or more to the end of Constantine's reign.³⁴ Lucius Papius Pacatianus and Flavius Ablabius served continuously from 329 to the end of Constantine's reign.³⁵ After eliminating the emperor Maximinus in 313, Licinius may have still shared imperial rule with Constantine, but in effect he controlled the eastern provinces. By serving as Licinius's praetorian prefect for about a decade, Julius Julianus was the most important imperial official in the East.

For centuries praetorian prefects had been at the side of emperors. Although their original responsibility had been the command of the praetorian guard, in 312

Constantine disbanded the corps at Rome.³⁶ In the later empire the duties of praetorian prefects expanded to include an administrative role as overseers of the regional vicars and provincial governors, a judicial role as deputies of their patron emperors, a military role as the primary brokers of supplies for the army, and a financial role as supervisors of the collection of taxes in commodities. The Tetrarchy developed by Diocletian and Maximian made multiple emperors common, and multiple emperors implied the appointment of multiple praetorian prefects.

Prefects were charged with fulfilling the orders of their emperors. Asclepiodotus, prefect of Constantius I, defeated the usurper Allectus in Britain in 296.³⁷ The prefect Flaccinus followed up the edict of Diocletian and Galerius that imposed penalties on Christians in 303 by demolishing a church at Nicomedia. After torturing a Christian, Flaccinus acquired a reputation as a "mass murderer."³⁸ The prefect Anullinus invaded Italy in 307 with the emperor Severus against the rival emperor Maxentius.³⁹ In 309 Maxentius sent the prefect Gaius Ceionius Rufius Volusianus with an army against the usurper Lucius Domitius Alexander in North Africa.⁴⁰ In 311 Maximinus gave verbal instructions to the prefect Sabinus, who in turn "disclosed the emperor's decision to the provincial governors in a letter written in Latin"; in the next year he sent a letter directing Sabinus to forward his orders to provincial governors by issuing a directive.⁴¹ In 312 the prefect Ruricius Pompeianus was in command of Maxentius's troops in northern Italy,⁴² while in the same campaign a prefect

32 PLRE 1:478–79, "Iulius Iulianus 35"; Barnes, *New Empire* (n. 4 above), 128; and P. Porena, *Le origini della prefettura del pretorio tardoantica*, *Saggi di storia antica* 20 (Rome, 2003), 296–99. The background of Julius Julianus is unknown. According to Ammianus Marcellinus, *Res gestae* 25.3.23, Julius Julianus's daughter Basilina was "noble already from her ancestors." But since Julius Julianus probably never acquired senatorial rank, her ancestral "nobility" presumably referred to her family's municipal or provincial prominence. The family was wealthy. Some members owned estates (see section 4), and Basilina once owned a valuable ornament or jewel (Libanius, *Orat.* 37.3). J. Vanderspoel, "Correspondence and Correspondents of Julius Julianus," *Byzantion* 69 (1999): 396–478, conjectures ingeniously that Julius Julianus may have been a native of Syria and the author of various letters included in the collection of the genuine letters of Julian; more dubious is his speculation that he was a brother of Eutropia, wife of the emperor Maximian (and hence an uncle of Fausta, Constantine's wife).

33 Discussion of dates in Porena, *Origini*, 342–56, 454–66, modifying PLRE 1:154–55, "Iunius Bassus 14," and Barnes, *New Empire* (n. 4 above), 129, 131.

34 PLRE 1:284–85, "Evagrius 2," and Barnes, *New Empire* (n. 4 above), 131–32, although Porena, *Origini*, 417–25, shortens Evagrius's tenure to 326–331. PLRE 1:590–91, "Valerius Maximus 49," and Barnes, *New Empire*, 132, although Porena, *Origini*, 405–9, argues that Valerius Maximus's tenure ended in 335.

35 Porena, *Origini*, 428–31, arguing that Lucius Papius Pacatianus's tenure started before mid-329, modifying PLRE 1:656, "L. Papius Pacatianus 2," and Barnes, *New Empire* (n. 4 above), 132. PLRE 1:3–4, "Fl. Ablabius 4"; Barnes, *New Empire*, 132; Porena, *Origini*, 409–15; and Van Dam, *Roman Revolution*, 368–72.

36 Aurelius Victor, *De Caesaribus* 40.25; Zosimus, *Historia nova* 2.17.2.

37 PLRE 1:115–16, "Iulius Asclepiodotus 3."

38 PLRE 1:342, "Flaccinus"; Lactantius, *De mortibus persecutorum* 16.4, "non pusillum homicidam"; identified as the prefect who destroyed the church by Barnes, *New Empire* (n. 4 above), 126.

39 Zosimus, *Historia nova* 2.10.1; PLRE 1:79, "C. Annius Anullinus 3," following a suggestion of A. Chastagnol, *Les fastes de la préfecture de Rome au Bas-Empire*, *Études prosopographiques* 2 (Paris, 1962), 47, claims that Zosimus mistakenly called Anullinus the "prefect of the court" and identifies him instead as the prefect of Rome under Maxentius in 307; disputed by Barnes, *New Empire* (n. 4 above), 116–17, 126, and Porena, *Origini*, 237–54.

40 PLRE 1:976–78, "C. Ceionius Rufius Volusianus 4."

41 Eusebius, *HE* 9.1.2, 9.9a.1–9, with PLRE 1:791, "Sabinus 3."

42 PLRE 1:713, "Ruricius Pompeianus 8."

accompanied Constantine and his invading army.⁴³ Eventually the prefects would be effectively detached from the imperial courts and administer large territories practically independently of the emperors. But whether as court officials or as independent overseers, praetorian prefects were powerful officials. The authority of a prefect could be compared to an “emperorship, but without the purple robes.”⁴⁴ In fact, one prefect was described as “almost an emperor.”⁴⁵

Reliance on powerful subordinates created dilemmas for emperors. On the one hand, they wanted to ensure the loyalty of prefects by granting honors, such as high offices and high rank. In 292, for instance, the two ordinary consuls were the current praetorian prefects, Afranius Hannibalianus and Julius Asclepiodotus.⁴⁶ In 310 again, even though four ruling emperors and two retired emperors had been available for nomination, the two ordinary consuls were prefects, Tattius Andronicus and Pompeius Probus.⁴⁷ Beyond the honor of the office itself, a consulship bestowed a higher rank on these prefects. At this time the praetorian prefects were still only equestrians, celebrated with the highest equestrian rank as *viri eminentissimi*, “most eminent men.” The award of an ordinary consulship, however, not only allowed them to give their names to the year, but also conferred senatorial rank. Immediately these consular prefects were enrolled in the senate as *viri clarissimi*, “most distinguished men.”⁴⁸ Afranius Hannibalianus

even went on to become prefect of the city of Rome, which was an office typically considered as the culmination of a senatorial career.

On the other hand, emperors wanted to protect themselves from being challenged and replaced by their prefects. In the later third century some prefects had become emperors. In 276 the prefect Florian briefly replaced his half-brother Tacitus; in 282 the prefect Carus was hailed as emperor already before soldiers mutinied against Probus. Diocletian restored stability to imperial rule in part by promoting Maximian as a co-emperor. They subsequently clarified the relationship between emperors and prefects in their selection of additional junior emperors in 293.

If military reputation and distinction had been the important criteria,⁴⁹ their choices might have shifted toward the current prefects, Hannibalianus and Asclepiodotus, who had both been military commanders under Probus, who had been serving as prefects for several years, and who were the ordinary consuls in 292. Instead, Diocletian and Maximian seem to have awarded consulships to these prefects in order to make them complicit in the selection of other men. Their choices were Constantius, a military officer who had served as a regional commander in the Balkans, and Galerius, another military officer.⁵⁰ The selection of important officers who were nevertheless not the highest ranking established an important new guideline: praetorian prefects were not to become emperors.⁵¹

43 *Panegyrici latini* 12(9).11.4, clearly classifying this anonymous prefect among Constantine’s courtiers, “qui tibi in consilio erant”; identified as Petronius Annianus by Barnes, *New Empire* (n. 4 above), 127, but doubted by Porena, *Origini* (n. 32 above), 294 n. 229.

44 Eunapius, *Vitae sophistarum* 490, βασιλεία . . . ἀπόρφυρος, referring to Anatolius, prefect of Illyricum in the late 350s.

45 Eunapius, *Vitae sophistarum* 463, μικροῦ βασιλεία, describing Flavius Ablabius.

46 *PLRE* 1:115–16, “Iulius Asclepiodotus 3”; 407–8, “Afranius Hannibalianus 3”; Barnes, *New Empire* (n. 4 above), 124–26; Porena, *Origini* (n. 32 above), 106–33.

47 *PLRE* 1:66, “Tattius Andronicus 7,” and 740, “Pompeius Probus 6.”

48 B. Salway, “Equestrian Prefects and the Award of Senatorial Honours from the Severans to Constantine,” in *Herrschaftsstrukturen und Herrschaftspraxis: Konzepte, Prinzipien und Strategien der Administration im römischen Kaiserreich: Akten der Tagung an der Universität Zürich 18.–20.10.2004*, ed. A. Kolb (Berlin, 2006), 115–35, for an excellent survey of equestrians who received senatorial rank. The distinction is clearly apparent in the joint dedications by Petronius Annianus and Julius Julianus: both were praetorian prefects, but because Petronius Annianus had been consul in 314, he

was *v. c.*, while Julius Julianus was only *v. em.* Joint dedications at Tropaeum Traiani (see n. 63, below), and at Ephesus, erected in 317: *AEpigr* 1938.85 = *I. Ephesos* 312, ed. C. Börker and R. Merkelbach, with H. Engelmann and D. Knibbe, *Die Inschriften von Ephesos*, vol. 2, Nr. 101–599 (*Repertorium*), Inschriften griechischer Städte aus Kleinasien 12 (Bonn, 1979), 112–13.

49 Aurelius Victor, *De Caesaribus* 39.28, with Porena, *Origini* (n. 32 above), 107–8, on the importance of military experience.

50 *PLRE* 1:227–28, “Fl. Val. Constantius 12,” and T. D. Barnes, *Constantine: Dynasty, Religion, and Power in the Later Roman Empire* (Chichester, 2011), 40–41, disputing that Constantius had been a praetorian prefect, as argued by Barnes, *New Empire* (n. 4 above), 125–26. *PLRE* 1:574–75, “C. Galerius Valerius Maximianus 9.”

51 Following the argument of A. Hostein, review of P. Porena, *Le origini della prefettura del pretorio tardoantica*, in *Antiquité Tardive* 15 (2007): 387–89, on the new role of praetorian prefects, “associated with but excluded from supreme power” (translated from p. 388); elaborated by A. Hostein, “Le consulat ordinaire à l’époque tétrararchique,” *Bulletin de la Société nationale des antiquaires de France* (2008): 209–24, at 214–17.

During the fourth century (and the first half of the fifth century) no prefects became emperors. In addition, no prefects and no members of prefects' families married members of imperial families (with one exception, below).⁵² Members of imperial dynasties typically married members of other imperial families, aristocrats from senatorial families, or generals, but a praetorian prefect was not allowed to become "a participant in the ancient imperial blood."⁵³ Even though prefects resembled emperors, they were kept at arm's length from imperial rule.

Another dilemma for emperors was an outcome of rule by multiple emperors. From their own patrons praetorian prefects might anticipate rewards and recognition, but as a consequence of feuding between emperors, they might also face hostility and even execution. The ideology of cooperative emperorship implied that the multiple emperors were to rule in harmony. In reality, civil wars between competing emperors and usurpers proliferated, in particular during the period between the retirement of Diocletian and Maximian in 305 and Constantine's victory over Licinius in 324. How were emperors to treat the former prefects and other administrators of defeated rivals?

Emperors had to decide between retribution and generosity. Soon after military officers and soldiers selected Diocletian as emperor in November 284, he had chosen both responses. He personally killed the praetorian prefect Aper, supposedly to avenge Aper's murder of the emperor Numerianus,⁵⁴ but he retained the prefect Aristobulus and even shared the ordinary consulships with him in 285. Aristobulus subsequently held various high offices that were reserved for senators, serving as proconsul (governor) of Africa and prefect of the city of Rome.⁵⁵ Diocletian also retained Pomponius Iannuarianus, who had been serving as prefect (governor) of Egypt since 282. By late 284, as soon as he heard the news about Diocletian's accession, Iannuarianus had transferred his allegiance and accepted the new

emperor's authority in Egypt. Diocletian had become emperor in Bithynia, and as he soon marched into the Balkans to face the rival emperor Carinus, this support in a crucial province to his rear was most welcome. It was also helpful in his confrontation against Carinus, the emperor in the western provinces who was responsible for the supply of Rome. Iannuarianus could now threaten to withhold Egyptian grain from shipment to Italy. Diocletian subsequently rewarded Iannuarianus, who may have served as a praetorian prefect before holding an ordinary consulship and the prefecture of Rome in 288.⁵⁶

Constantine and Licinius faced similar decisions as they expanded their sovereignty. After his victory over Maxentius in 312, Constantine reappointed various notables who had held offices under his rival, including a former praetorian prefect. In 314 he awarded Maxentius's prefect Gaius Ceionius Rufius Volusianus an ordinary consulship. The other ordinary consul of that year, Petronius Annianus, may also have been a holdover from Maxentius's reign. Petronius Annianus subsequently served as a praetorian prefect under Constantine.⁵⁷ In contrast, after Licinius defeated Maximinus in 313, he executed "all those who had supported the policies of Maximinus, in particular the men whom he had honored holding administrative offices." The executed officials included a high-ranking treasury official, a former prefect of Egypt, and "many others."⁵⁸

Julius Julianus, however, was perhaps a carryover from the previous regime. He was the prefect of Egypt when he received a petition in 314 from the magistrates of Karanis complaining about the misconduct of some district officials.⁵⁹ Before his prefecture Julius Julianus

52 Although Rufinus, prefect from 392 to 395, did apparently scheme to become emperor by having his daughter marry the teen-aged emperor Arcadius: Zosimus, *Historia nova* 5.1.4–5, 3.1–5.

53 Eusebius, *HE* 10.8.4, commenting on the marriage between Licinius and Constantine's half-sister.

54 *PLRE* 1:81, "Aper 2."

55 *PLRE* 1:106, "T. Cl. Aurelius Aristobulus," and Porena, *Origini* (n. 32 above), 73–89.

56 *PLRE* 1:452–53, "Pomponius Iannuarianus 2," with the excellent discussion of Iannuarianus's recognition of Diocletian in Egypt by A. Stefan, "Caius Valerius Diocles: Le premier nom d'empereur de Dioclétien et la reconnaissance de son autorité en Égypte; À propos de *P. Oxy.* XLII 3055 et *AE* 1973, 540," *Antiquité Tardive* 23 (2015): 269–86, stressing his "vital role in assuring, or rather blocking, the supply of grain to Rome and Italy" (translated from p. 285).

57 *PLRE* 1:68–69, "Petronius Annianus 2."

58 Eusebius, *HE* 9.11.3–4, with *PLRE* 1:233–34, "Clodius Culcianus"; 692, "Peucetius."

59 *P. Cair. Isid.* 73, dated between January and August 314 by A. E. R. Boak and H. C. Youtie, *The Archive of Aurelius Isidorus in the Egyptian Museum, Cairo, and the University of Michigan (P. Cair. Isidor.)* (Ann Arbor, 1960), 285–86; also *P. Cair. Isid.* 71–72, for the preparatory data. Another papyrus mentioning

had presumably acquired experience by holding lesser offices in the imperial administration, probably in the eastern provinces.⁶⁰ A gap in the list of prefects of Egypt allows the possibility that he had been holding office for a year or more before receiving this petition.⁶¹ If Julius Julianus had indeed been prefect already during the civil war between Licinius and Maximinus in the first half of 313, then he may have played the same role as Pomponius Januarianus in the war between Diocletian and Carinus. Perhaps he had likewise quickly declared his allegiance for Licinius and ensured recognition of the emperor in Egypt.

Licinius soon rewarded him with promotion as praetorian prefect,⁶² and Julius Julianus began serving at the emperor's court. After Licinius's campaign against the Goths on the lower Danube frontier in 314 or 315, Julius Julianus erected a commemorative dedication at Tropaeum Traiani in Scythia. Even though Licinius had been the emperor doing the campaigning, this dedication credited the victory and the reconstruction of the city to both Constantine and Licinius, and the closing protocol claimed that the monument had been erected by both Julius Julianus

and Petronius Annianus, Constantine's prefect.⁶³ Then the superficial harmony collapsed. Constantine invaded the Balkans in 316, and after the treaty of the next year he assumed control of most of Licinius's European territories. According to Eusebius of Caesarea, Licinius's behavior subsequently turned harsh. Not only did he issue new legislation about the treatment of prisoners and marriage, increase tax assessments, and arrest aristocrats; he also (allegedly) oppressed Christians and their bishops.⁶⁴ As Licinius's prefect Julius Julianus was responsible for implementing these directives.

Licinius's hostile policies about Christianity would have threatened Eusebius, bishop of Caesarea in Palestine. As a result, he was happy to celebrate Constantine's victory over Licinius in 324: "God pushed this wicked man down headlong beneath Constantine's feet, with all his advisers and friends."⁶⁵ Years later he claimed that there had been another bloodletting. The victorious emperor had "judged his [Licinius's] supporters according to the law of war and imposed an appropriate punishment."⁶⁶ One of those casualties may have been Proculus, who held one of the ordinary consulships for 325. Proculus was perhaps a supporter of Licinius, and his promotion as consul may have been Constantine's attempt at reconciliation after the civil war. Initially the victorious emperor also allowed Licinius and his young son Licinius to go into exile in Thessalonica. By early 325 he had them executed, however, and because Proculus's name abruptly disappeared from the consular formula, perhaps he had been

Julius Julianus as prefect was explicitly dated by the consular year of 314: see R. Pintaudi, "La data della prefettura di Julius Julianus," *ZPapEpig* 46 (1982): 261–63 = *Sammelbuch griechischer Urkunden aus Ägypten*, Band 16.2, ed. H.-A. Rupprecht with J. Jengstl (Wiesbaden, 1985), 316, no. 12705.

60 An inscription on a boundary stone found near the modern town of Pınarbaşı in Phrygia, dated to the second half of the third century, mentioned an imperial procurator named Julius Julianus who was serving as the interim governor of Phrygia and Caria: see M. Christol and T. Drew-Bear, "Une délimitation de territoire en Phrygie-Carie," in *Travaux et recherches en Turquie 1982*, Collection Turcica 2 (Leuven, 1983), 23–42 = *AEpigr* 1982.896, with K. Belke and N. Mersich, *Phrygien und Pisidien*, TIB 7 = DenkWien 211 (Vienna, 1990), 388–39, on the site. Porena, *Origini* (n. 32 above), 299, suggests a possible identification with the future prefect.

61 The last known predecessor was Aurelius Ammonius, prefect of Egypt until at least August 312: see C. Vandersleyen, *Statthalterliche Verwaltung in der römischen Kaiserzeit: Studien zum praefectus Aegypti*, Historia Einzelschriften 175 (Stuttgart, 1962), 13, and *PLRE* 1:55, "Aurelius Ammonius 6." Porena, *Origini* (n. 32 above), 297, suggests that Julius Julianus began his prefecture of Egypt in 313. Julius Julianus also seems to have been a deputy of the praetorian prefects during a judicial hearing: see *P. Oxy.* 41.2952, with J. R. Martindale, "Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire: *Addenda et corrigenda* to Volume I," *Historia* 29 (1980): 474–97, at 487.

62 Julius Julianus was prefect already in April 315: see Optatus, *Contra Donatistas*, Appendix 8.

63 *CIL* 3.13734 = *ILS* 8938 = T. Grünwald, *Constantinus Maximus Augustus: Herrschaftspropaganda in der zeitgenössischen Überlieferung*, Historia Einzelschriften 64 (Stuttgart, 1990), 242, no. 402, dated before the outbreak of war between the two emperors in autumn of 316. As another possible indication of the presence of Julius Julianus on the Danube frontier, note that he acquired a eunuch named Mardonius as a teacher for his daughter Basilina. Mardonius later became a teacher for Julian, who described him as a native "Scythian": Julian, *Misopogon* 352a–b.

64 Eusebius, *HE* 10.8.10–19, elaborated in *Vita Constantini* 1.51–55. Eusebius, *Vita Constantini* 1.52, claimed that Licinius expelled all the Christians serving at his court. If that accusation is correct, then Julius Julianus either renounced his Christianity or had not been a Christian.

65 Eusebius, *HE* 10.9.1.

66 Eusebius, *Vita Constantini* 2.18.

stripped of his consulship (or even executed) in the immediate aftermath.⁶⁷

Julius Julianus, however, not only again survived the change of emperors; he apparently had had nothing to worry about. Libanius, the famous sophist at Antioch in the later fourth century, claimed that Constantine had instead been impressed. Julius Julianus had been “an upright and wise prefect whom his victorious enemy [Constantine] had respected and whom he had encouraged his own officials to consider as a model for administration.”⁶⁸

Constantine may even have honored Julius Julianus with a consulship in 325. After the removal of Proculus’s name from the consular formula, official documents included the name of the new replacement consul in the dating formula (in the genitive case) as Ἰωνίου Ἰουλιανοῦ, Jonius Julianus. Because “Jonius” is an odd name, it has frequently been considered in need of emendation.⁶⁹ One possibility is to identify this replacement consul as Julius Julianus.⁷⁰ If correct, the promotion of Julius Julianus as consul would imply that Constantine had again pointedly reached out to one of Licinius’s most prominent supporters. But another possibility, recently proposed, is “to understand Ionius as a *signum* or *supernomen* used in the papyrological

formulae in place of several *nomina*.”⁷¹ In that case an identification with Julius Julianus is less likely.

The marriage between Constantine’s half-brother and the former prefect’s daughter was unconventional in several respects. First, if Julius Julianus was not the replacement consul in 325, then he would not have acquired senatorial rank, and Julius Constantius would have been marrying the daughter of an equestrian. Second, Julius Julianus had served in the regime of Licinius; he was not one of Constantine’s long-standing loyalists. Third, as a praetorian prefect Julius Julianus had been, for many years, an exceptionally powerful official. But since the reign of Diocletian emperors had learned to maintain some distance between prefects and imperial rule. Fourth, as the son and grandson of emperors Julius Constantius always had the potential to become an emperor, and a marriage with a prefect’s daughter might have enhanced the possibility of a challenge. Constantine was therefore breaking precedent and tempting fate. Why would he encourage his half-brother to marry the daughter of the prefect of his former imperial rival?

3. Egyptian Grain for Rome and Byzantium

Because attested information about Julius Julianus’s career ends with Libanius’s recollection of Constantine’s respect, it is necessary to speculate about the attributes that made him so attractive to the executioner of his former patron. We should look both backward to what Julius Julianus might have done during his tenure as prefect and forward to what Constantine hoped he would offer for the future. Through a marriage between his half-brother and Julius Julianus’s daughter, Constantine was presumably both rewarding the former prefect and investing in his network of supporters.

Despite the tension that developed between Constantine, emperor in the western provinces, and Licinius, emperor in the eastern provinces, the halves of the Roman world could not yet be split into distinct empires. One vital connection still remained between West and East: the supply of grain for Rome from Egypt. By the

67 See B. Salway, “Roman Consuls, Imperial Politics, and Egyptian Papyri: The Consulates of 325 and 344 CE,” *Journal of Late Antiquity* 1 (2008): 278–310, at 291–99, for intriguing speculation about Proculus, perhaps “an ex-general or praetorian prefect of Licinius.”

68 Libanius, *Orat.* 18.9, admittedly in an oration praising Julian.

69 P. Stras. 3.137, line 20, and 138, line 17, ed. P. Collomp et ses élèves, *Papyrus grecs de la Bibliothèque Nationale et Universitaire de Strasbourg*, Publications de la Faculté des Lettres de l’Université de Strasbourg 97 (Paris, 1948), 13–16 = *Sammelbuch griechischer Urkunden aus Ägypten*, Band 5.1, ed. F. Bilabel (Heidelberg, 1934), 162–63, nos. 8019–20; and P. Charite 13, line 40, ed. K. A. Worp, *Das Aurelia Charite Archiv (P. Charite)*, Studia Amstelodamensia ad epigraphicam, ius antiquum et papyrologicam pertinentia 12 (Zutphen, 1981), 42. In the notes to the editions, the suggested emendation is *Caenionius* or *Caenionius*.

70 So Chastagnol, *Fastes* (n. 39 above), 85 n. 89; *PLRE* 1:478–79, “Iulius Iulianus 35”; J. R. Martindale, “Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire: *Addenda et corrigenda* to Volume I,” *Historia* 23 (1974): 246–52, at 249; and Barnes, *New Empire* (n. 4 above), 102–3; summary of the uncertainty in R. S. Bagnall et al., *Consuls of the Later Roman Empire*, Philological Monographs of the American Philological Association 36 (Atlanta, 1987), 629–30.

71 B. Salway, “Roman Consuls,” 289; reprised in idem, “Redefining the Roman Imperial Élite in the Fourth Century AD,” in *Elites in the Ancient World*, ed. P. Briks, *Szczecińskie Studia nad Starożytnością* 2 (Szczecin, 2015), 199–220, at 212.

later fourth century much of the grain from Egypt would be diverted to Constantinople instead, and the population of Rome had declined dramatically. But in the early fourth century the population of the capital is assumed to have been still close to its maximum size of one million residents. Such an enormous population depended on the shipment of grain from both Egypt and North Africa. Grain from overseas was essential for the maintenance of the people of Rome; it was also important for safeguarding the popularity of the emperors at the capital.⁷²

In the past emperors had worried about or even manipulated this link between Rome and Egypt. Most famously, after his proclamation as emperor in Palestine in 69, Vespasian immediately seized Egypt and its grain in order to pressure his rival Vitellius in Italy, and then planned to threaten Rome with a food shortage by invading North Africa.⁷³ A fourth-century author noted that the emperor Commodus had been so concerned about any disruption in the Egyptian grain supply that he had created a new shipping company to transport African grain. This same author claimed to quote the emperor Aurelian when he had boasted of using Egyptian grain to increase the size of the loaves distributed at Rome: “nothing is more welcome than the population of Rome when filled with food.”⁷⁴

Emperors who controlled Egypt had great influence over the welfare of the people of Rome and, when the empire was divided, over the emperors who supervised Rome. But in the early fourth century the eastern emperors did not use, and perhaps did not understand,

their leverage in confrontations with rival western emperors. In 307, when the eastern emperor Galerius was opposed to Maxentius, who had been hailed as emperor at Rome, he first sent his fellow emperor Severus to invade Italy and then invaded himself. Both invasions ended badly, and both emperors withdrew. In particular, Galerius’s failure was a consequence of having implemented the wrong strategy. Because the new walls of Rome were a deterrent against an attack or a siege, the weakness of the capital was no longer its lack of fortifications. Instead, it was the brittleness of its food supply. Galerius would have had more success at undermining Maxentius in Rome by trying to convince Maximinus, the emperor who customarily resided in Palestine or Syria and who had immediate jurisdiction in Egypt, to restrict the supply of grain from Egypt.⁷⁵

Soon afterward Maxentius did experience the dire consequences of a food shortage at Rome. In 308 soldiers at Carthage proclaimed Lucius Domitius Alexander emperor.⁷⁶ Alexander was already serving as vicar of Africa, and during his emperorship he may have developed a connection with Constantine.⁷⁷ When his revolt disrupted the shipment of grain to Rome, Maxentius took the blame. In fact, a panegyrist would later criticize him for his culpability in having “murdered” the people of Rome through a food shortage.⁷⁸ Maxentius’s initial response to this emergency was to raise taxes on senators and farmers,⁷⁹ presumably to purchase or requisition more food from the regions he still controlled in Italy and Sicily. He also confirmed an alliance with Maximinus,⁸⁰ which may have included reassurances about the supply of grain from Egypt.

72 Population of Rome: R. Van Dam, *Rome and Constantinople: Rewriting Roman History during Late Antiquity* (Waco, TX, 2010), 8–9, 49–50. Importance of grain from Egypt: B. Sirks, *Food for Rome: The Legal Structure of the Transportation and Processing of Supplies for the Imperial Distributions in Rome and Constantinople*, *Studia Amstelodamensia ad epigraphicam, ius antiquum et papyrologicam pertinentia* 31 (Amsterdam, 1991), 105; and P. Erdkamp, *The Grain Market in the Roman Empire: A Social, Political, and Economic Study* (Cambridge, 2005), 235, “Egypt contributed the largest part of the grain required by Rome.” For the continued necessity of Egyptian grain through the 4th century, see J. Durliat, *De la ville antique à la ville byzantine: Le problème des subsistances*, *Collection de l’École Française de Rome* 136 (Rome, 1990), 42–48.

73 Tacitus, *Hist.* 3.8, 48; also Josephus, *Bellum Iudaicum* 4.605, “Vespasian recognized that Egypt was a vital region in the empire because of its supply of grain.”

74 *Historia Augusta*, *Commodus Antoninus* 17.7, *Divus Aurelianus* 47.4.

75 For Maximinus’s control of Syria and Egypt, see Lactantius, *De mortibus persecutorum* 36.3.

76 Zosimus, *Historia nova* 2.12, 14, for basic narrative.

77 *ILS* 8936, a joint dedication to Alexander and Constantine, found perhaps near Sicca Veneria; with V. Aiello, “Costantino, Lucio Domizio Alessandro e Cirta: Un caso di rielaborazione storiografica,” in *L’Africa romana: Atti del VI Convegno di studio su “L’Africa romana,” Sassari, 16–18 dicembre 1988*, ed. A. Mastino (Sassari, 1989), 1:179–96, on the possibility of cooperation.

78 *Panegyrici latini* 12(9).4.4.

79 Aurelius Victor, *De Caesaribus* 40.24; also *Chronica urbis Romae*, ed. T. Mommsen, *Chronica minora saec. IV. V. VI. VII*, vol. 1, *MGH AuctAnt* 9 (Berlin, 1892), 148, “there was a great famine. . . . He levied a tax of gold on all Romans, and they paid.”

80 Lactantius, *De mortibus persecutorum* 43.3, 44.10.

This crisis finally ended when Maxentius's expeditionary army defeated Alexander's troops in North Africa.

Upon taking over control of Italy, Constantine became accountable for the supply of Rome. To fulfill that responsibility he had to ensure the supply of grain from both Egypt and North Africa. During his residence at Rome in late 312, one of his first concerns was to confirm the loyalty of the provincial officeholders in North Africa. He soon met with Patricius, the vicar of North Africa, and Anullinus, the governor of Africa Proconsularis. Anullinus may have been the son of Gaius Annius Anullinus, who had served as a prefect of Rome under Maxentius and whom Constantine retained as prefect of Rome. Perhaps Maxentius had also appointed Anullinus as a provincial governor in North Africa. If so, Constantine's retention of Anullinus would have been another sign of reconciliation with Maxentius's former supporters. It was also part of his strategy to stabilize his administration in North Africa and ensure shipments of grain for Rome.⁸¹ Soon afterward Constantine appointed the first (attested) "prefect of the grain supply of Africa" and sent him an edict outlining regulations about shipmasters in Africa and bakers at Rome.⁸²

As long as Rome remained a very large city, its welfare was inextricably tied to the supply of grain from North Africa and Egypt, and a civil war between emperors could expose its precarious situation. In 361, for instance, when the simmering conflict between Constantius II and Julian came to a head, Rome was caught in the middle. Constantius was still in Antioch,

and he certainly controlled Egypt. Julian began marching from Gaul east along the Danube. Along the way he sent a letter to Rome complaining about Constantius. Because Julian was now the closest emperor to Italy, his letter may have been a reply to a request for assistance with supplies. Usually the emperor in the West would also have had jurisdiction in North Africa. But in this case, Constantius had organized troops to enforce his control over North Africa.⁸³ In addition, he apparently had "many ships loaded with African grain" that would normally have gone to Rome directed instead to Constantinople. Because the population of the new capital was not yet very large, this African grain was more likely being stockpiled for Constantius's army as it marched into the Balkans. As a result, because Julian had no control over African grain or Egyptian grain, he had to resort to an alternative strategy. According to a panegyrist, Julian was forced to use tax revenues and his own resources to purchase grain for the "hungry city."⁸⁴

Even when emperors were cooperating, magistrates at Rome worried about supplies from overseas. During his tenure as prefect of Rome in 384, Symmachus repeatedly reminded emperors about the needs of the capital. He wanted them to nudge the officials in North Africa who were responsible for transporting grain; he also looked forward to the arrival of grain from Egypt: "we will venerate these ships as if they were sacred."⁸⁵

After his victory in 312, Constantine had to worry about the supply of grain for Rome from both North Africa and Egypt. Even though he immediately enforced his jurisdiction over North Africa, the supply of grain from Egypt was still outside his direct authority. At his meeting with Licinius in northern Italy in early 313, the topic of Egyptian grain may have been on the agenda, along with Licinius's upcoming civil war against Maximinus. After Licinius defeated his rival and assumed control over Egypt, his marriage to Constantine's half-sister was a satisfactory guarantee for the continuing supply of grain to Rome. For a few years the relationship between the two emperors was stable. In 315 they even shared the ordinary consulships. Then

81 PLRE 1:78–79, "Anullinus 2"; 673, "Patricius 1," with discussion in R. Van Dam, *Remembering Constantine at the Milvian Bridge* (Cambridge, 2011), 170–81.

82 CTh 11.30.4, 13.5.2–3, sent to Amabilianus. These excerpts were apparently all from the same constitution issued in June 314, according to O. Seeck, *Regesten der Kaiser und Päpste für die Jahre 311 bis 476 n. Chr.: Vorarbeit zu einer Prosopographie der christlichen Kaiserzeit* (Stuttgart, 1919), 98, or in December 315, according to PLRE 1:49, "Amabilianus." Also CTh 14.3.12, issued to the proconsul of Africa in 370, referring to a now-lost decree of Constantine about bread makers. D. Vera, "Costantino e il ventre di Roma: A proposito della discussa prefettura d'Africa," in *Costantino: Prima e dopo Costantino/Constantine: Before and after Constantine*, ed. G. Bonamente, N. Lenski, and R. Lizzi Testa, *Munera* 35 (Bari, 2012), 333–45, connects Constantine's development of the prefecture of Africa with "the objective of preparing Africa to assume the increased burden of the entitlements of food for the people of Rome" (translated from p. 337).

83 Ammianus Marcellinus, *Res gestae* 21.7.1–5, control over North Africa; 10.7, Julian's letter.

84 *Panegyrici latini* 3(11).14, with Van Dam, *Rome and Constantinople* (n. 72 above), 53, on the population of Constantinople.

85 Symmachus, *Relationes* 9.7, ships from Egypt; 18.2, Africa.

their relationship turned hostile. In the late summer of 316 Constantine marched south to Arles, crossed northern Italy, and attacked Licinius's army in the Balkans.

Various motivations have been proposed for Constantine's rather unexpected hostility. Perhaps the birth of Constantine II, his first son with Fausta, during the summer of 316 encouraged him to think more ruthlessly about his plan of establishing a family dynasty.⁸⁶ Perhaps Constantine was concerned that Licinius, as emperor in the East, would acquire too much influence in the kingdom of Armenia, where the king had recently promoted Christianity as the official religion.⁸⁷

Another, more compelling, motivation for Constantine to initiate war with Licinius in autumn of 316 was his apprehension over an alternative destination for Egyptian grain. This suggestion derives from papyri that have been overlooked in discussions of this war. At the beginning of 316 the people of Egypt were paying a tax for the transport of commodities overseas. A receipt for a landowner from a village near Karanis, dated to January 316, mentioned payment of a "charge for transportation on sea-going ships."⁸⁸ The fee for transportation was not new,⁸⁹ but the destination was intriguing. In a papyrus from Oxyrhynchus at about the same time, one of the provincial governors in Egypt insisted upon the collection of the same tax, this time with the qualification that it would subsidize the transport of goods "from Alexandria to Byzantium and Heracleia."⁹⁰ If, as seems likely, this city was Heracleia Perinthus on

the Sea of Marmara,⁹¹ then both destinations were ports in Thrace. The collection of this supplementary tax implies that Egyptian grain was now being sent to provision Licinius's large army in the Balkans.⁹²

In the late third and early fourth century emperors were constructing new warehouses or remodeling older buildings into granaries in the provinces along the lower Danube and at the river's mouth. The sites of these storehouses included military forts and large imperial villas in Scythia, Moesia Inferior, Dacia Ripensis, and Moesia Superior, as well as cities such as Tropaeum Traiani, Nicopolis ad Istrum, Diocletianopolis, and Serdica. These interior granaries would have served as collection points for food produced locally. Granaries were also located in Histria and Callatis, which were port towns on the Black Sea that could have received deliveries from provinces around the eastern Mediterranean by way of the Hellespont and Bosphorus.⁹³ Along the Danube frontier Licinius had earlier campaigned against Goths, and he would subsequently campaign against Sarmatians. Apparently his entire eastern empire was supplying his Balkan warfare.

But because Licinius's jurisdiction in Pannonia and the Balkans was adjacent to Constantine's jurisdiction in northern Italy, it may have appeared that he was also stockpiling provisions for a move against his fellow emperor. As a result, Constantine may have perceived the shipments of grain north to Byzantium and Heracleia as a double threat. Even as those shipments provisioned Licinius's army, they seemed to jeopardize, perhaps even replace, the transport of Egyptian grain to Rome.

According to the settlement after the conclusion of the war with Licinius in 317, Constantine extended

86 So Barnes, *Constantine* (n. 50 above), 100–103.

87 For the importance of the kingdom of Armenia for the Roman eastern frontier, see R. Van Dam, *Kingdom of Snow: Roman Rule and Greek Culture in Cappadocia* (Philadelphia, 2002), 110–16.

88 *P. Cair. Isid.* 59.1, line 4, . . . ὑπ(ἐρ) [ν]αύλων θαλαττίων πλοίων, as translated by Boak and Youtie, *Archive of Aurelius Isidorus* (n. 59 above), 242.

89 E.g. *P. Cair. Isid.* 51, a receipt issued in 311 for the collection of transportation dues associated with the military *annona*, 55, a similar receipt issued in 314.

90 *P. Oxy.* 17.2113, lines 9–14, ed. A. S. Hunt, *The Oxyrhynchus Papyri*, part 17 (London, 1927), 201–3, . . . εἰς λό[γο]ν ναύλο[υ] τοῦ προχ[ω]ροῦντος | εἰς μετάθ[ε]σιν . . . ματικῶν | εἰδῶν τῶν πε[μ]φθησο- | μένων ἀπὸ | τῆς Ἀλεξανδρ[ε]ίας ἐπ[ὶ] τὸ καὶ Ἡράκλειαν . . .; dated to January 316, with *PLRE* 1:77, "Aurelius Antonius 4" (governor of Aegyptus Herculia), and P. Pruneti, "L'archivio di Aurelios Heras *praepositus pagi*," *Aegyptus* 74 (1994): 33–36, on the dossier of letters.

91 Identified as Heracleia Perinthus by Hunt, *Oxyrhynchus Papyri*, 202–3.

92 Note that Maximinus seized both Byzantium and Heracleia when he invaded the Balkans in early 313 (Lactantius, *De mortibus persecutorum* 45.4–6). Perhaps these cities were already being used as depots for military grain.

93 E. Rizos, "Centres of the Late Roman Military Supply Network in the Balkans: A Survey of *Horrea*," *Jahrbuch des römisch-germanischen Zentralmuseums Mainz* 60 (2013): 659–96, for an excellent survey of late Roman granaries in the Balkans, with the summation of E. Rizos, "Remarks on the Logistics and Infrastructure of the *Annona militaris* in Eastern Mediterranean and Aegean Areas," *Antiquité Tardive* 23 (2015): 287–302.

his jurisdiction over the Balkans and the Greek peninsula.⁹⁴ Athens quickly acknowledged its new overlord by erecting a statue with a dedicatory inscription that honored the emperor as its “general.” The city’s leaders were presumably hoping that the emperor would fulfill the traditional obligations of a municipal generalship by ensuring the supply of food. According to his nephew Julian, Constantine was so flattered that he instituted an annual distribution of grain for Athens.⁹⁵ In the past Athens had received grain from the regions around the Black Sea, and earlier emperors had been willing to distribute surplus Egyptian grain to Greek cities. But the regions that produced surplus grain in Constantine’s jurisdiction were western provinces in North Africa and Sicily, and the immediate source of his gift is not obvious. Perhaps a later request to his son, the emperor Constans, that he donate grain to Athens from several fertile islands was based on Constantine’s earlier generosity.⁹⁶

Licinius, meanwhile, had retained control over Thrace and Moesia (along the lower Danube), and he seems to have spent the final seven years of his reign in these regions, campaigning on frontiers and perhaps residing at Byzantium.⁹⁷ During this period he could still have had Egyptian grain shipped to Byzantium and Heracleia to supply both his court and his troops.

Egypt certainly remained under the jurisdiction of Licinius. In fact, during the early 320s the dating formulae on Egyptian papyri did not cite the ordinary consuls appointed by Constantine, but instead continued to reference the consulships of Licinius and his son Licinius II in 321. The next years were dated as “the second year after the consulships of Licinius and Licinius,” “the third year,” “the fourth year.”⁹⁸ Egypt was frozen in Licinian time. But because Licinius does not seem to have used grain as a weapon against his rival, perhaps another stipulation of the settlement of 317 had been an agreement about the supply of Egyptian grain to Rome.

Licinius’s prefect Julius Julianus presumably remained with him in Thrace, and as head of the

imperial administration, the prefect was sending directives (and the names of the consuls) to the provincial administrators. In this context one possible reason for Constantine’s subsequent admiration for Julius Julianus was that the prefect had not obstructed the shipments of grain from Egypt. The supply of Rome was the one issue over which an emperor in the West might appreciate an accommodating prefect in the East and even hold him up as an exemplar. If, despite the growing tension between the emperors, Julius Julianus had nevertheless facilitated the transport of Egyptian grain to Rome, then he had effectively also been serving as Constantine’s praetorian prefect. His goodwill might well have earned Constantine’s gratitude and the reward of his daughter’s marriage into the imperial family.

4. Notables of the Eastern Provinces

In 324 Constantine attacked Licinius again. This time his assault included a fleet commanded by his son Crispus. After collecting warships and transports in a new harbor at Thessalonica, Constantine had moved his navy to the harbor of Athens at Piraeus. In response, Licinius began to build up his own navy, which he stationed in the Hellespont. During the battles, however, shifting winds and the incompetence of his admiral doomed his fleet, and Licinius’s “hope in [relying on] the sea had been lost.”⁹⁹ Not only was Constantine’s navy able to blockade Byzantium; it could also, more importantly, bring provisions to his soldiers.¹⁰⁰ According to a contemporary poet, Constantine was now “the emperor of the Nile.”¹⁰¹ With control of the shipping lanes in the Aegean, Constantine blocked Licinius and his army from access to Egyptian grain and ensured his own success.

It is important to emphasize that Licinius’s transport of Egyptian grain to Thrace provided a model, and perhaps an inspiration, for Constantine’s subsequent transformation of Byzantium. Licinius was to be forgotten, and both his achievements and his reputation were erased. Constantine quickly issued edicts that invalidated Licinius’s laws, and he ordered the

94 *Origo Constantini imperatoris* 5.18; Zosimus, *Historia nova* 2.20.1.

95 Julian, *Orat.* 1.8c–d.

96 Eunapius, *Vitae sophistarum* 492.

97 Barnes, *New Empire* (n. 4 above), 82.

98 Bagnall et al., *Consuls* (n. 70 above), 176–83, for discussion of these “postconsulates.” For later regulations about the announcement of new consuls, see *CTh* 8.11.1–3.

99 *Origo Constantini imperatoris* 5.27.

100 Zosimus, *Historia nova* 2.22.3–26.1.

101 Publilius Optatianus Porfyrius, *Carm.* 5.3, “iam Nili princeps,” with Van Dam, *Remembering Constantine* (n. 81 above), 158–70, on Porfyrius the poet.

removal of his rival's images. By recasting Byzantium as Constantinople, he also obliterated the memory of Licinius in the city.¹⁰² But at the same time he retained some of his predecessor's policies. Licinius had already developed the infrastructure for shipping Egyptian grain to Thrace. He had imported Egyptian grain to Byzantium and Heracleia to supply his court and his troops; Constantine would import Egyptian grain to support the growing population of Constantinople.

Constantine coopted Byzantium as his namesake capital; he likewise reclaimed Constantia, Licinius's widow, for the Constantinian dynasty. A series of bronze coins minted at Constantinople in 326 depicted Constantine; his three oldest sons, Crispus, Constantine II, and Constantius II; his mother Helena; his wife Fausta; and Constantia. The legends on the obverses of the coins described Constantine as *augustus*, the three sons as *caesars*, and Helena and Fausta each as an *augusta*. In contrast, Constantia had no imperial title and was described simply as "sister of Constantine *augustus*."¹⁰³ These coins announced that after the executions of her husband and son, Constantia was no longer represented as the wife and mother of Licinian emperors, but had been transformed back into a sister of the ruling emperor.

Sometime after the execution of Crispus, Constantia was honored with a statue at Rome. The dedication for this statue likewise located her firmly in the Constantinian family, "begotten of the divine lineage." It also described her as "sister of our lord Constantine *augustus*" and "aunt of the two *caesars*."¹⁰⁴ Constantia's identity was now, again, totally Constantinian.¹⁰⁵

102 For the invalidation of Licinius's legislation, see S. Corcoran, "Hidden from History: The Legislation of Licinius," in *The Theodosian Code: Studies in the Imperial Law of Late Antiquity*, ed. J. Harries and I. Wood (London, 1993), 97–119; for the transformation of Byzantium, see R. Van Dam, "'Constantine's Beautiful City': The Symbolic Value of Constantinople," *Antiquité Tardive* 22 (2014): 83–94.

103 P. M. Bruun, *The Roman Imperial Coinage*, vol. 7, *Constantine and Licinius A.D. 313–337* (London, 1966), 570–71, Constantinople 7–15; dated to March 326 by L. Ramsköld, "Coins and Medallions Struck for the Inauguration of Constantinopolis 11 May 330," in *Niš and Byzantium*, vol. 9, *Symposium Niš 3–5 June 2010; The Collection of Scientific Works*, ed. M. Rakocija (Niš, 2011), 125–57, at 126–28.

104 *CIL* 6.40777 (= 6.1153) = *ILS* 711.

105 In the later 320s Palestine hosted no fewer than three mothers of emperors: Helena (former wife, or consort, of Constantius I),

During the later 320s Constantine also co-opted Licinius's prefect. A marriage between the emperor's family and Julius Julianus's family was perhaps reward for the prefect's cooperation. But as Constantine looked to the future, this alliance also offered another advantage. The historian Aurelius Victor, writing in the 360s, commented on Diocletian's generosity toward officeholders who had served under his predecessors: "almost all of his adversaries were retained. . . . That no one was deprived of wealth, reputation, and office after a civil war was a novel and unexpected outcome in human memory."¹⁰⁶ In fact, Diocletian's calculation in 284, and Constantine's after 324, were likely more pragmatic. New emperors could not simply dismiss (or execute) officials and start over with a blank slate. Emperors needed and valued the experience and connections of previous administrators.

In 324 Constantine was returning to the eastern provinces after an absence of almost twenty years. In a letter to the provincials in the Greek East he introduced himself as an *arriviste*, a Westerner from the ocean next to faraway Britain, where "the sun is directed to set."¹⁰⁷ He immediately faced two obstacles. One was the lingering popularity of Licinius. Because of their gratitude for Constantine's support, Christian authors vilified Licinius. Eusebius of Caesarea, for instance, quickly revised his earlier favorable evaluation of Licinius in his *Ecclesiastical History* by inserting snide comments about the onset of the emperor's "madness."¹⁰⁸ But despite this subsequent denigration, Licinius's reputation remained favorable among Greek notables. Decades later the sophist Libanius remembered Licinius's attempts to invigorate cities and their councils, and he blamed Constantine for their subsequent decline.¹⁰⁹

The second concern was finding local supporters to staff an imperial administration. After his long absence Constantine would have had few connections

Eutropia (widow of Maximian), and Constantia. Helena was obviously known as Constantine's mother; the other two were also recast in terms of their relationship with Constantine, as his mother-in-law and his (half-)sister.

106 Aurelius Victor, *De Caesaribus* 39.14–15.

107 Eusebius, *Vita Constantini* 2.28.2.

108 Eusebius, *HE* 9.9.12; extended diatribe in Eusebius, *HE* 10.8.

109 Libanius, *Orat.* 30.6, 49.2, with discussion in H.-U. Wiemer, "Libanius on Constantine," *CQ*, n.s. 44 (1994): 511–24.

with local aristocrats and provincial officeholders. Nor could he have relied on his family's contacts. The only member of his extended family who is known for certain to have lived in the East recently was his half-sister Constantia during her marriage to Licinius. But as an imperial widow Constantia was more of a problem than a solution, and she was converted back into a Constantinian spinster. Instead, Julius Constantius would marry the daughter of the prefect who for almost ten years had been the most powerful imperial official in the East.

Julius Julianus had also been an influential patron. Like other prefects, he would have been responsible for promoting provincial officeholders. When Libanius once complimented a friend for his service as a provincial governor, he emphasized the support of the praetorian prefect: "he gave you a starting point for distinction by promoting you to govern Palestine."¹¹⁰ During the fourth century emperors from western provinces who ruled in the East were especially dependent on their prefects' networks of supporters. The emperor Valens, for instance, was a native of Pannonia who had made his career in the army and did not speak Greek. Soon after becoming emperor in the East in 364, he faced a revolt led by Procopius, a Greek notable from Cilicia. As a counter to his own shortcomings and this political opposition, Valens had to rely on the assistance of other officials with connections in the East. The most important was Modestus, who had served as count of the East and prefect of Constantinople under the emperor Julian. Modestus reemerged to serve as Valens's praetorian prefect for eight years during the 370s. Under Valens many of the imperial officials in the eastern provinces were less associates of the emperor and more cronies of Modestus.¹¹¹

Constantine, likewise, was a military man who needed access to the notables of the East. After defeating Licinius he soon traveled through Asia Minor to Syria. In 313 Licinius had made the same trip. After pursuing Maximinus through Asia Minor, the victorious Licinius had presided over the execution of some of his

rival's administrators at Antioch.¹¹² In late 324 or early 325 Constantine visited Antioch.¹¹³ Although he may have intended to eliminate some of Licinius's officials, a more important objective would have been to recruit local aristocrats in Asia Minor and Syria to become his supporters.

His entourage probably included Valerius Maximus, who was serving as vicar of the East by mid-325 and later became a praetorian prefect. Another member was Flavius Constantius, the current praetorian prefect. Perhaps in order to ease the fears of Licinius's former supporters in the East, Flavius Constantius erected a dedication at Ancyra in Galatia in which he described Constantine as the "most clement" of emperors. After the emperor left Antioch, Flavius Constantius remained behind, becoming one of the first praetorian prefects to serve as a powerful regional administrator rather than high court official.¹¹⁴

Holding these top offices as praetorian prefect and vicar implies that Flavius Constantius and Valerius Maximus had previously held lower offices, perhaps under Constantine in western provinces.¹¹⁵ Even

112 Eusebius, *HE* 9.11.3–8.

113 For proof of Constantine's visit to Antioch, see Ramskold, "Constantine's Vicennalia" (n. 28 above), 449–52. His attendance at the ecclesiastical council that met in Antioch in early 325 is less certain: see C. R. Galvão-Sobrinho, *Doctrine and Power: Theological Controversy and Christian Leadership in the Later Roman Empire*, *The Transformation of the Classical Heritage* 51 (Berkeley, 2013), 81–84.

114 *PLRE* 1:225, "Fl. Constantius 5"; Barnes, *New Empire* (n. 4 above), 131; and Porena, *Origini* (n. 32 above), 382–97. The background and earlier career of Flavius Constantius are unknown. During his prefecture he erected dedications in honor of Constantine in eastern provinces: *CIL* 3.6751 = Grunewald, *Constantinus Maximus Augustus* (n. 63 above), 244 no. 417 (at Ancyra); H. I. MacAdam, "Fragments of a Latin Building Inscription from Aqaba, Jordan," *ZPapEpi* 79 (1989): 163–72 = *AEpigr* 1989.750 (at Aqaba); *AEpigr* 2006.1473 (at Ancyra). The use of Latin in these dedications might imply that Flavius Constantius was from the West, but because Latin was the preferred language of imperial administration even in the East, Greek-speaking magistrates also learned and used Latin: see Van Dam, *Roman Revolution* (n. 27 above), 185–93, on the use of Latin in the East. Chausson, *Stemmata aurea* (n. 21 above), 121–22, 127, suggests that Flavius Constantius was another son of Constantius and Helena and hence a full brother of Constantine. If so, what had he been doing before his prefecture in 324, and why had he not been considered a possible emperor?

115 See P. Porena, "I dignitari di Costantino: Dinamiche di selezione e di ascesa durante la crisi del sistema tetrarchico," in Bonamente, Lenski, and Lizzi Testa, *Costantino* (n. 82 above), 293–320, for an outstanding (even if sometimes speculative) overview of

110 Libanius, *Ep.* 901.4, on the governorship of Entrechius in Palestine in 361/362, appointed by Saturninus Secundus Salutius, praetorian prefect under Julian: see *PLRE* 1:278–79, "Entrechius 1."

111 Van Dam, *Kingdom of Snow* (n. 87 above), 107–9, and N. Lenski, *Failure of Empire: Valens and the Roman State in the Fourth Century A.D.*, *The Transformation of the Classical Heritage* 34 (Berkeley, 2002), 59–67.

though the lists of provincial officeholders in the eastern provinces are somewhat sketchy, Constantine certainly imported various officials from the West to serve in the East soon after 324. Tiberius Flavius Laetus, who served as prefect of Egypt in 326, was probably a native of north Italy,¹¹⁶ and Septimius Zenius, who became prefect of Egypt in 328–329, was an Italian.¹¹⁷ Domitius Zenophilus had been a provincial governor in Sicily and in Numidia before becoming proconsul (governor) of the province of Achaia in 324 and subsequently of the province of Asia.¹¹⁸ Lucius Crepereius Madalianus had been responsible for the upkeep of the harbors of Ostia and Portus in Italy and a legate in Africa before serving as a legate in the province of Asia and governor of Pontus and Bithynia.¹¹⁹ Lucius Amnius M . . . nius Caesonius Nicomachus Anicius Paulinus had been another legate in Africa before serving as proconsul of Asia and Hellespontus.¹²⁰ Lucius Aradius Valerius Proculus held offices and priesthoods at Rome and served as a legate in Numidia, a tax assessor in Spain, and governor of the province of Byzacena in North Africa before becoming *consularis* (governor) of the province of Europa and Thracia in the later 320s.¹²¹ Flavius Dionysius was a native of Sicily who became governor of Phoenice from 328 to 329 and then *consularis* of neighboring Syria.¹²² Flavius Gemellus,

who served as a *comes* in Macedonia, was most likely a native of Gaul.¹²³

This pattern of transplants from service in the West to service in the East continued into the 330s. Quintus Flavius Maesius Egnatius Lollianus had been curator of the public infrastructure at Rome and governor of Campania in Italy before serving as count of the East in the early 330s.¹²⁴ Flavius Hyginus was another Italian who served as prefect of Egypt in 332.¹²⁵ Fabius Titianus had been governor of a region in Italy and then of Sicily before serving as proconsul of the province of Asia, perhaps in the mid-330s.¹²⁶

In contrast, other imperial officials during the later 320s and 330s were natives of the East. Flavius Magnilianus, a native of Cappadocia, became prefect of Egypt in 330; Flavius Philagrius was another Cappadocian who served as prefect of Egypt from 334 to 336 and again from 338 to 340.¹²⁷ Flavius Antonius Theodorus was from Heliopolis in Phoenice and served as a *rationalis* (accountant) in Egypt before becoming prefect of Egypt from 337 to 338.¹²⁸ Flavius Optatus had been a tutor for the emperor Licinius's young son during the early 320s. His wife was from Paphlagonia, and a nephew later lived in Constantinople. Optatus switched his allegiance to Constantine, who honored him with a consulship in 334 and the rank of patrician.¹²⁹ The most successful of these Easterners was Flavius Ablabius, a native of Crete who initially served on the staff of a governor of Crete. He eventually served as vicar of the diocese of Asiana (western Asia

the backgrounds of Constantine's magistrates, concluding that "probably a substantial percentage of the magistrates selected by Constantine to administer the dioceses and provinces of the East after 325 were his loyalists, who were already experienced in the western provinces" (translated from p. 319).

116 *P. Oxy.* 51.3620, ed. J. R. Rea, *The Oxyrhynchus Papyri*, vol. 51 (London, 1984), 52–55, dated 2 February 326; no entry in *PLRE* 1. In 337 Tiberius Flavius Laetus buried his wife in a sarcophagus in Padua: *CIL* 5.2943, with *AEpigr* 2003.702, for the date. The senator named Tiberius Flavius Laetus who served as a *comes* in Spain under Constantine II may have been a relative: *PLRE* 1:492, "Tiberius Flav. Laetus 1."

117 *PLRE* 1:990, "Septimius Zenius."

118 *PLRE* 1:993, "Domitius Zenophilus," with the updated career in Barnes, *New Empire* (n. 4 above), 158, 160.

119 *PLRE* 1:530, "Lucius Crepereius Madalianus."

120 *PLRE* 1:679, "Amnius Manius Caesonius Nicomachus Anicius Paulinus junior signo Honorius 14," with the correction of his name by I. Tantillo, "L. Amnius . . . nius Caesonius Nicomachus Anicius Paulinus," *Epigraphica* 77 (2015): 285–99.

121 *PLRE* 1:747–49, "L. Aradius Valerius Proculus signo Populionius 11."

122 *PLRE* 1:259–60, "Flavius Dionysius 11."

123 *ILS* 8454, an epitaph for his two nieces who visited him from Gaul, found at Beroea, with *PLRE* 1:388, "Fl. Gemellus."

124 *PLRE* 1:512–14, "Q. Flavius Maesius Egnatius Lollianus signo Mavortius 5."

125 *PLRE* 1:446, "Flavius Hyginus 3."

126 *PLRE* 1:918–19, "Fabius Titianus 6," with D. Feissel, "Fabius Titianus, proconsul d'Asie sous Constantin, et les origines du culte de l'apôtre Jean à Éphèse," in *Epigrafia e ordine senatorio, 30 anni dopo*, ed. M. L. Caldelli and G. L. Gregori, Tituli 10 (Rome, 2014), 159–66, suggesting that Titianus fulfilled Constantine's directive for the construction of a memorial at the tomb of the apostle John at Ephesus.

127 *PLRE* 1:532, "Fl. Magnilianus"; 694, "Fl. Philagrius 5."

128 *PLRE* 1:900, "Fl. Antonius Theodorus 22."

129 *PLRE* 1:650, "Flavius Optatus 3," with the discussion of R. A. Kaster, *Guardians of Language: The Grammarian and Society in Late Antiquity*, The Transformation of the Classical Heritage 11 (Berkeley, 1988), 419–21.

Minor) from 324 to 326, and as a praetorian prefect from 329 to the end of Constantine's reign.¹³⁰

Some of these natives of the East may have previously held lesser offices during the reign of Licinius. If so, their patron had been the praetorian prefect Julius Julianus. As a result, one way to imagine Constantine's new provincial administration in the East is as a combination of supporters from his network in the West with Julius Julianus's protégés from his network of officials in the East. Perhaps Julius Julianus had encouraged them to anticipate a new future in Constantine's service, while also reassuring the emperor about their qualifications and loyalty.¹³¹

This alliance with Julius Julianus and his deputies received reinforcement through an ecclesiastical alliance at almost the same time. Eusebius had served as bishop of Beirut before transferring to become bishop of Nicomedia. After negotiating a settlement with Constantine in 317, Licinius often resided at Nicomedia. As an adviser to Constantia, the emperor's wife, Eusebius also became influential at the imperial court. In fact, Constantine would later claim that during the civil war of 324 Eusebius had been "an accomplice in the tyrant's cruelty" by recruiting armed men to help Licinius and sending "eyes" to spy on Constantine. After his victory Constantine initially had Eusebius arrested and sent into exile.¹³²

130 See n. 35. P. Porena, "Ancora sulla carriera di Flavius Ablabius, prefetto del pretorio di Costantino," *ZPapEpig* 190 (2014): 262–70, argues that Ablabius had already served as a vicar in Italy under Constantine in the mid-310s.

131 P. Heather, "New Men for New Constantines? Creating an Imperial Elite in the Eastern Mediterranean," in *New Constantines: The Rhythm of Imperial Renewal in Byzantium, Fourth–Thirteenth Centuries; Papers from the Twenty-Sixth Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies, St Andrews, March 1992*, ed. P. Magdalino, Society for the Promotion of Byzantine Studies, Publications 2 (Aldershot, 1994), 11–33, at 14–16, on Constantine's need to recruit supporters in the East, but mentioning only Julius Julianus as an example.

132 Influence with Constantia: Socrates, *HE* 1.25; Sozomen, *HE* 2.27; Philostorgius, *HE* 1.9. Constantine's allegations: Urkunde 27.9–10, 16, ed. H.-G. Opitz, *Athanasius Werke*, vol. 3, no. 1, *Urkunden zur Geschichte des arianischen Streites 318–328* (Berlin, 1934–35), 58–62, quoted in Athanasius, *De decretis Nicaenae synodi* 41. Note that bishop Alexander of Alexandria denounced Eusebius of Nicomedia as a supporter of "the disgraceful heresy" of Arius: Urkunde 4b, ed. Opitz, 6–11, quoted in Socrates, *HE* 1.6.4–30. Bishop Athanasius of Alexandria later claimed that Basilina had engineered the deposition of the bishop of Hadrianople, who had opposed Eusebius's "impious teachings": Athanasius, *Historia Arianorum* 5.1. If these accusations

Eusebius of Nicomedia was a relative of Julius Julianus.¹³³ At Licinius's court the bishop Eusebius had been the ecclesiastical equivalent of the prefect Julius Julianus, with the former trying to manage doctrinal controversies and the latter overseeing the provincial administration. Licinius had promoted both his top imperial administrator and the most influential bishop from the same large family. In the later 320s Constantine hoped to tap into this family and its extended connections. Perhaps at about the same time that Julius Constantius married Julius Julianus's daughter, Constantine allowed Eusebius to be reinstated as bishop of Nicomedia.¹³⁴ By then he had recognized the value of Licinius's supporters. Just as Julius Julianus was a patron for local notables serving in the imperial administration, so Eusebius was a central node in a network of influential churchmen. To impose his authority in the East, Constantine now needed to connect with both secular and ecclesiastical networks.

In return for their support and service Constantine offered rewards to local notables and their families. At Rome some senatorial families had married into the Constantinian family already during the 310s. Immediately after 324, however, Constantine could not dangle similar imperial marriages before eastern aristocrats. Two of his half-sisters, even though now again unmarried, were tainted from their previous marriages; his other half-siblings and his son Crispus were (presumably) still married; and his other children were still too young. By the later 320s, however, some candidates for marriage suddenly became available.

One was the emperor himself. With the death of Fausta in 326, Constantine was a widower. If he had contemplated another marriage, that would have presented an interesting dilemma.¹³⁵ Then his half-brother

are credible, then Eusebius may have influenced both the emperor's wife and the prefect's daughter at Licinius's court.

133 Ammianus Marcellinus, *Res gestae* 22.9.4, for Eusebius as a distant relative of Julian, presumably through the emperor's mother's family.

134 Eusebius's letter requesting reinstatement: Urkunde 31, ed. Opitz, *Urkunden*, 65–66, quoted in Socrates, *HE* 1.14.2–6, and Sozomen, *HE* 2.16.3–7. Constantine's edict of recall: Socrates, *HE* 1.14.1.

135 Although Constantine was then in his early fifties, new marriages for older emperors were not uncommon during the fourth century. Constantius II married Faustina, his third wife, in his mid-forties (Ammianus Marcellinus, *Res gestae* 21.6.4). Magnentius

Julius Constantius also became unmarried again. His first marriage had been into a senatorial family at Rome. As there were few important senatorial families in the East, Julius Constantius now instead married the daughter of the highest-ranking equestrian official.¹³⁶

During the later years of Constantine's reign only one other exogamous marriage into the Constantinian family was contemplated. Constantine proclaimed Constans, his youngest son, as caesar in 333. Perhaps at about the same time, while still a young teenager or even younger, Constans became engaged to Olympias, the daughter of the prefect Flavius Ablabius. While waiting for their marriage, Constans was thought to have supported Olympias "as his own wife."¹³⁷ Even though the wedding was postponed, most likely until the betrothed children were older, presumably the promise of a marriage was enough to ensure the loyalty of Ablabius.¹³⁸

Constantine found other ways to elevate the rank and status of notables from eastern provinces who held high offices. In the eastern half of the empire under Licinius during the previous decade, most of the court

officials, provincial administrators, and military commanders had been equestrians, and Licinius himself had once tried to regulate the distribution of equestrian ranks among imperial officeholders and provincial notables in the East.¹³⁹ Constantine now traded in more valuable currencies of prestige. He bestowed the title of *comes*, "companion," on members of his palace entourage and then more generally as an honorific title. As the title could be given to both senators and equestrians, administrators who held only equestrian offices, including praetorian prefects, were eligible for the honor. At Constantine's funeral in 337 companions were among the first officials allowed to pay their respects at the emperor's golden coffin.¹⁴⁰ Constantine also occasionally appointed praetorian prefects as ordinary consuls. The two consuls of 327, for instance, were prefects, with Flavius Constantius at the end of his tenure and Valerius Maximus at the beginning of his term. Likewise, the two consuls of 331 were prefects, Junius Bassus coming to the end of his lengthy tenure but Flavius Ablabius at the beginning of his own.

Although holding an ordinary consulship conferred senatorial rank, Constantine also awarded senatorial rank to lesser officials. Eusebius of Caesarea was quite astonished at Constantine's generosity. He claimed that the emperor almost indiscriminately appointed petitioners as prefects, consuls, administrators, and companions, and readily bestowed "the honor of the senate."¹⁴¹ Constantine had already upgraded

proposed marriage to Constantina, a daughter of Constantine, in his late forties (Peter the Patrician, *Frag.* 16, *FGrHist* 4:190). Valentinian I married Justina, his second wife, in his forties, and they were still having children into his fifties: *PLRE* 1:488–89, "Iustina." Theodosius married Galla, his second wife, in his early forties, and they had a daughter in his late forties: *PLRE* 1:382, "Galla 2." For an argument that Constantine did marry again, see Chausson, *Stemmata aurea* (n. 21 above), 109, 115–16.

136 Perhaps at the same time he moved to Corinth: Libanius, *Orat.* 14.30–31. On the assumption that Julius Constantius lived in a region under Constantine's jurisdiction, the earliest he could have moved to Greece was 317. But because he was married to Galla until at least the mid-320s, it seems more sensible to associate his residence in Corinth with his marriage to Basilina. Note that one of the local notables to welcome Julius Constantius to Corinth was Menander, who already had senatorial rank: Libanius, *Orat.* 14.5–6, with *PLRE* 1:596, "Menander 3."

137 Engagement: Ammianus Marcellinus, *Res gestae* 20.11.3. Wife: Athanasius, *Historia Arianorum* 69.1. Note F. Chausson, "La famille du préfet Ablabius," *Pallas* 60 (2002): 205–29, at 211–17, suggesting that Olympias's mother was a niece of Constantine, i.e., that Ablabius had married an otherwise unknown daughter of one of Constantine's half-siblings. If correct, then Constans's engagement was more endogamous than exogamous. Constans and Olympias apparently never married; after Constans's death in 350, Constantius II had her married to Arsaces, king of Armenia: *PLRE* 1:642, "Olympias 1."

138 After Constantine's death Ablabius was executed as a potential usurper (Eunapius, *Vitae sophistarum* 464).

139 *CTh* 8.4.3 + 10.7.1 + 10.20.1 + 12.1.5, excerpts from an edict issued in 317 to the people of Bithynia, with S. Corcoran, *The Empire of the Tetrarchs: Imperial Pronouncements and Government AD 284–324* (Oxford, 1996), 193, 283–84. For the monopoly of equestrians under Licinius and their survival under Constantine, see C. Lepelley, "Du triomphe à la disparition: Le destin de l'ordre équestre de Dioclétien à Théodose," in *L'ordre équestre: Histoire d'une aristocratie (II^e siècle av. J.-C. – III^e siècle ap. J.-C.)*, ed. S. Demougis, H. Devijver, and M.-T. Raepsaet-Charlier, Collection de l'École française de Rome 257 (Rome, 1999), 629–46, and M. Bodnaruk, "Administering the Empire: The Unmaking of an Equestrian Elite in the Fourth Century CE," in *Official Power and Local Elites in the Roman Provinces*, ed. R. Varga and V. Rusu-Bolindeț (London, 2017), 145–67.

140 Eusebius, *Vita Constantini* 4.67.1.

141 Eusebius, *Vita Constantini* 4.1.2. Eusebius continued with the observation that "thousands of men received the rank of διασημότατοι." Av. Cameron and S. G. Hall, *Eusebius, Life of Constantine: Introduction, Translation, and Commentary* (Oxford, 1999), 154; B. Bleckmann and H. Schneider, *Eusebius von Caesarea, De vita Constantini: Über das Leben Konstantins*, Fontes Christiani 83 (Turnhout, 2007), 413; and L. Pietri and M.-J. Rondeau, *Eusèbe*

the equestrian rank of the governors of some western provinces to senatorial rank during the late 310s; after 324 he appointed senatorial governors to more provinces in the East. The reign of Constantine initiated the expansion of the senatorial order in the East.¹⁴²

Constantine founded Constantinople as his primary residence in the East. With the establishment of its own senate, however, Constantinople became a new imperial capital, and notables from throughout the East began to migrate there. To facilitate their transfer Constantine issued a law that required them to construct houses in Constantinople in exchange for grants of land in the dioceses of Asiana and Pontus.¹⁴³ The new senators and their families quickly acquired estates in neighboring regions. Julius Julianus's wife (Julian's grandmother) owned an estate in Bithynia.¹⁴⁴ Flavius Ablabius owned an estate in Bithynia and a house in Constantinople.¹⁴⁵ Some natives of western provinces who served in the East likewise ended up staying and acquiring estates. Julius Constantius

apparently owned property near Ephesus.¹⁴⁶ In fact, since his son Julian was born in the new capital, Julius Constantius was one of the first western senators to reside in Constantinople.¹⁴⁷

Greek notables could anticipate various personal and financial rewards for holding offices in Constantine's provincial administration. Yet another reward was participation in public ceremonies at Constantinople. At the new capital eastern aristocrats could appear before large audiences, just like the senators at Rome. But unlike at Rome, where emperors rarely even visited during the fourth century, in Constantinople senators often appeared with emperors and their families.

Some ceremonies that celebrated the city also honored the imperial dynasty. The formal inauguration of the city in May 330 included the dedication of a large bronze statue of Constantine, shown standing on a high column in his new forum. The festival also included a remarkable procession through the hippodrome. In this parade soldiers escorted a smaller statue of Constantine before the emperor and an audience that would have included courtiers and senators.¹⁴⁸ During the festivities Constantine distributed large silver and bronze medallions as gifts to notables, and he scattered many smaller silver, bronze, and brass medallions and medalettes as he rode in a four-horse chariot through the crowds. Some of these medallions depicted a Tyche ("Good Fortune"), the protective deity of Constantinople, on one side, and on the other a head of Constantine or one of his sons.¹⁴⁹

de Césarée, *Vie de Constantin*, SC 559 (Paris, 2013), 459, translate this rank as *clarissimi*, "most distinguished," i.e., senatorial rank. In fact, the Greek equivalent of *clarissimus* was λαμπρότατος, while διασημώτατος was the equivalent of *perfectissimus*, the second-highest equestrian rank. Note that in official letters to bishops in the East, including Eusebius of Caesarea, Constantine properly described counts Acacius and Strategius as διασημώτατοι, i.e., equestrian *virii perfectissimi*: Eusebius, *Vita Constantini* 3.53.2, 62.1, as interpreted by O. Hirschfeld, "Die Rangtitel der römischen Kaiserzeit," in his *Kleine Schriften* (Berlin, 1913), 655, and A. H. M. Jones, *The Later Roman Empire 284–602: A Social, Economic, and Administrative Survey* (Oxford, 1964), 1086 n. 62. Initially many of these new eastern senators had the rank of only *clari*, "distinguished": see *Origo Constantini imperatoris* 6.30, with the excellent arguments of A. Skinner, "The Early Development of the Senate at Constantinople," *BMGS* 32 (2008): 128–48, on Constantine's role in the emergence of the senate at Constantinople.

142 In general, see Jones, *Later Roman Empire*, 526–29, and P. Heather, "Senators and Senates," in *CAH*, vol. 13, *The Late Empire A.D. 337–425*, ed. Av. Cameron and P. Garnsey (Cambridge, 1998), 184–210. For Achaia, see C. Davenport, "The Governors of Achaia under Diocletian and Constantine," *ZPapEpig* 184 (2013): 225–34.

143 The law is not extant, but mentioned in *Novellae Theodosii* 5.1.1, issued in 438.

144 Julian, *Ep.* 25.426d. Basilina, Julian's mother, bequeathed estates to the church at Ephesus: Palladius, *Dialogus* 13.169–70.

145 Eunapius, *Vitae sophistarum* 464, estate; Synesius, *Ep.* 61, house; for the snobbery associated with vineyards in Bithynia, see T. Boulay, "Vineyard Ownership: A *Habitus* of Power? The Roots of Land Tenure and the Culture of Wine-Making among a New Political Class, from Constantine to Julian," *JLA* 9 (2016): 415–35.

146 His son Gallus subsequently owned an ancestral estate near Ephesus: Socrates, *HE* 3.1.9; Sozomen, *HE* 5.2.15. Gallus had been allowed to inherit property from his father but not from his mother: Julian, *Epistula ad Athenienses* 273b.

147 Ammianus Marcellinus, *Res gestae* 22.9.2, for Julian's birth at Constantinople; also Themistius, *Orat.* 4.59a, "the city assisted at his birth, the city raised him and educated him."

148 G. Dagron, *Naissance d'une capitale: Constantinople et ses institutions de 330 à 451*, Bibliothèque byzantine, Études 7 (Paris, 1974), 37–41, 120–24.

149 Details of inaugural medallions and medalettes in Ramskold, "Coins and Medallions" (n. 103 above), and L. Ramskold and N. Lenski, "Constantinople's Dedication Medallions and the Maintenance of Civic Traditions," *NZ* 119 (2012): 31–58. On gold coins minted at Constantinople in 336–337, the obverses depicted busts of Constantine, Constantius II, and Constans, and the reverses showed the emperor standing in a quadriga and scattering coins with his

Other ceremonies that celebrated the Constantinian family also paid tribute to the city and its notables. In July 336 Constantius II married a cousin, the daughter of Julius Constantius. Even though the marriage was a family affair, the ceremony at Constantinople was a spectacular public festival. It was even more spectacular because the thirtieth anniversary of Constantine's imperial rule was being celebrated at the same time. The emperor hosted parties and banquets, and he presented extravagant gifts to individuals and cities. Bishops were in town to attend a council. Envoys from India arrived to offer gifts of precious jewels and exotic animals. At the wedding Constantine served as his son's groomsman.¹⁵⁰ Julius Constantius would, of course, have attended, and perhaps also his very young son Julian, who was a half-brother of the bride, a cousin of the groom, and a nephew of the best man.

The prefect Julius Julianus had been favored when his daughter married one of Constantine's half-brothers, and the prefect Flavius Ablabius would be fortunate to have his daughter betrothed to Constantine's son Constans. The latter engagement was exceptional, because Constantine's other sons and daughters tended to marry cousins. To compensate for the shortage of Constantinian brides and grooms, the emperor devised an ingenious solution in his foundation of a new eastern capital. At Constantinople the establishment of a senate provided provincial aristocrats from the East with a roundabout opportunity to become members of an extended Constantinian family.

The senate of Constantinople was imagined to be something like another of Constantine's offspring. The orator Themistius would be quite explicit: "the senate is the progeny and the child of Constantine."¹⁵¹ As a result, in the absence of Constantinian brides, other dignitaries of the East effectively "married" a Constantinian descendant by being enrolled in the senate. In the process they also joined Constantine's family. Many imperial officials, military commanders, soldiers, and municipal notables added "Flavius," Constantine's

family name, to their own names,¹⁵² and Constantine apparently presented gold "loyalty rings" to military officers. The inscription on these rings affirmed their public allegiance to the emperor: *fidem Constantino*, "loyalty to Constantine."¹⁵³

For notables in the eastern empire, the acquisition of senatorial rank, membership in a senate at Constantinople, attendance at the court of a resident emperor, new estates, a new Constantinian name, and loyalty rings would become the substitutes for a Constantinian marriage.

5. Conclusions: A Network for Julian

Julius Julianus survived two civil wars between emperors in the East, and in both cases his involvement with Egypt seems to have assisted his durability. If he was already prefect of Egypt, he had perhaps declared his allegiance to Licinius early in the conflict with Maximinus, and during his service as Licinius's praetorian prefect he had apparently allowed grain from Egypt to continue to be shipped to Rome, which was under Constantine's jurisdiction. Within a few years after Constantine took control of the eastern provinces, Julius Julianus's daughter Basilina married into the Constantinian family. Her new husband, Julius Constantius, had already helped his half-brother Constantine through his first marriage to Galla, which formed a link to a senatorial family at Rome. His second marriage to Basilina now formed a link to a network of regional notables in the eastern provinces.¹⁵⁴

152 Van Dam, *Roman Revolution* (n. 27 above), 123–24. Even Julius Constantius's name might be modified. In Egypt the consular formula for 335 consistently listed "Julius Constantius, patrician, brother of our lord Constantine Augustus," but in Italy he was named as *Flavius* Constantius: G. Annibaldi, "Rinvenimento di due 'Tabulae Patronatus' presso Preturo," *Notizie degli scavi di antichità*, ser. 6, 12 (1936): 94–107 = *AEpigr* 1937.121.

153 I. Popović, "Fidelity Rings' to the Emperors of the Constantinian House," *Starinar*, n.s. 50 (2000): 187–98, with a catalogue of the rings found in Gaul, Pannonia, and Dacia; A. Barbero, *Costantino il vincitore* (Rome, 2016), 309–10, states that the weight of 1 gold ring was the equivalent of 4 *solidi*.

154 Basilina did not appear on imperial coins. The impression of a small sardonyx gemstone, now in the Museum für Abgüsse Klassischer Bildwerke in Munich, depicted the head of a woman in profile whose hair was braided in the style of a turban. The legend surrounding the bust named her as "Basilina." R. Delbrueck, *Spätantike Kaiserporträts von Constantinus Magnus bis zum Ende*

right hand: Bruun, *Roman Imperial Coinage* (n. 103 above), 584–85, Constantinople 103–6.

150 Eusebius, *Vita Constantini* 4.49–50. Since Eusebius had attended the council at Constantinople and delivered a panegyric in honor of Constantine's thirtieth anniversary as emperor, his description of the wedding was an eyewitness account.

151 Themistius, *Orat.* 4.55a.

Constantine died in May 337. Previously he had proclaimed his three surviving sons as caesars. He had also promoted his nephew Flavius Julius Dalmatius, son of Flavius Dalmatius, as a fourth caesar in 335. In spring of 337 all the junior emperors were still quite young. Constantine II was only twenty years old, his brothers Constantius and Constans were teenagers, and Dalmatius was presumably about the same age. For a moment it appeared as if Julius Constantius had been designated to assist his four nephews with the succession. Like the new emperors, Julius Constantius now wore “a scarlet robe with gold embroidery.”¹⁵⁵ His role as a senior statesman, perhaps even as a regent, was brief, however, perhaps less than a month. Constantius soon instigated the assassinations of his uncle Julius Constantius and his oldest son, his uncle Flavius Dalmatius and his two sons (including the junior emperor Dalmatius), other relatives, and some high-ranking advisers. In September only the sons of Constantine were proclaimed as augusti, senior emperors. Among the few male relatives to survive this murderous “dissension among the successors to the empire” were Julius Constantius’s younger sons, Gallus and Julian.¹⁵⁶

In modern narratives Julius Julianus and Julius Constantius both assume the role of minor background contributors to Constantine’s success. But it is important to consider the consequences of this marriage that united their families from their perspective too, and in

particular with regard to the long-term outcomes. At the time the marriage connected Constantine with new supporters from the notables in the Greek East. In the long run those supporters and their sons would also be available to assist a true Greek emperor who was the grandson of Julius Julianus and the son of Julius Constantius. The immediate advantage of support for Constantine and his sons could readily become the foundation of future backing for Julian.

Even though Constantius allowed Gallus and Julian to survive, he was worried enough about future challenges that he finally banished them for several years to the badlands of Cappadocia. Eventually, out of necessity, he promoted each of them as a caesar. In each case, however, Constantius attempted to isolate the new emperor from his family’s natural network of supporters. In 351 he stationed Gallus, the offspring of Julius Constantius’s marriage into a senatorial family from Rome, as a caesar at Antioch. In 355 he promoted Julian, the offspring of Julius Constantius’s marriage into an eastern Greek family, as a caesar in Gaul. Constantius sent his “Roman” cousin to the East and his “Constantinopolitan” cousin to the West. He seemed to anticipate that Julian could be a powerful rival in the East. At the same time that he expatriated Julian to the West, he was working to strengthen his own support in the East through a new marriage. In the early 350s Constantius married Eusebia (his second wife), who was from Thessalonica. Her father had been a consul in 347, and her two brothers would be the ordinary consuls in 359. Julian himself referred to Eusebia’s family as “thoroughly Greek, the most famous of the Greeks.” Through his new marriage Constantius tried to turn himself into a “Greek” emperor.¹⁵⁷

In contrast, Julian was a Greek emperor by birth. When he eventually returned to the eastern provinces as the sole emperor, he could finally rely upon his family’s supporters. One important loyalist was his uncle Julianus, his mother’s brother. Uncle Julianus was another survivor in this family. His religion was malleable. Even though his wife was a Christian, Julianus followed Julian’s lead and scorned Christianity during his nephew’s reign. In a letter Julian noted

des Westreichs, Studien zur spätantiken Kunstgeschichte 8 (Berlin, 1933), 25, 48, 174–75, and Tafel 75.3, identified the woman as Basilina, detected resemblances to the “simple profile” of her son Julian, and claimed the round braided hairstyle was characteristic of women in the Constantinian family; R. Calza, *Iconografia romana imperiale da Carausio a Giuliano (287–363 d.C.)*, Quaderni e guide di archeologia 3 (Rome, 1972), 260–61, with Tavola XCI, 322 no. 175, likewise classified the hairstyle as Constantinian and accepted Delbrueck’s identification. But M. Wegner, “Die Bildnisse der Frauen und des Julian,” in H. P. L’Orange, *Das spätantike Herrscherbild von Diokletian bis zu den Konstantin-Söhnen 284–361 n. Chr.*, Das römische Herrscherbild 3 (Berlin, 1984), 158, has dated the gemstone to the late medieval period.

155 Zosimus, *Historia nova* 2.39.2.

156 Ammianus Marcellinus, *Res gestae* 25.3.23; with the comprehensive discussion of the massacre by R. W. Burgess, “The Summer of Blood: The ‘Great Massacre’ of 337 and the Promotion of the Sons of Constantine,” *DOP* 62 (2008): 5–51. Another survivor was Julius Nepotianus, the son of Constantine’s half-sister Eutropia and briefly emperor at Rome in 350: *PLRE* 1:62.4, “Iul. Nepotianus 5.” For the exculpatory rumor that Constantine had been poisoned by his half-brothers, see Philostorgius, *HE* 2.16.

157 Julian, *Orat.* 3.107d, Thessalonica; 110b, Thessalonica, Greek family. *PLRE* 1:300–301, “Eusebia”; 307–9, “Flavius Eusebius 39” (father) and “Fl. Eusebius 40” (brother); 448–49, “Flavius Hypatius 4” (brother).

that he and his uncle instead shared their “family’s gods.”¹⁵⁸ Julianus’s political support was also adjustable. He had once served as governor of Phrygia, perhaps under Constantius, perhaps even as far back as under Constantine, and he may have been an imperial administrator in Egypt. In 362 Julian sent him to Antioch as the *comes Orientis*, the equivalent of a vicar for the large diocese stretching from the Taurus Mountains in southeastern Asia Minor around the eastern Mediterranean.¹⁵⁹ This diocese still included Egypt, with its supply of grain.¹⁶⁰ Uncle Julianus’s experience would have been useful as the emperor now stockpiled supplies in Syria for his upcoming invasion of the Persian Empire.

Other natives of Greek provinces who served as administrators under Julian in the East might also be connected with the Julianic side of his family. By the early 360s his grandfather’s generation had aged out of imperial administration (with the possible exception of Saturninius Secundus Salutius, whom Julian appointed as his praetorian prefect in 361).¹⁶¹ But the next generation would have already held lesser offices under Constantine and Constantius and would now have the experience to hold senior offices. In addition to his uncle Julianus, this generation of notables from the East might have included Helpidius, who served as *comes rei privatae* (a high administrator of imperial properties) at the court and accompanied Julian on his invasion of the Persian empire. Libanius noted that Helpidius was older than Julian.¹⁶² Ecdicius Olympus served as prefect of Egypt. He may be the Ecdicius who had been a student at Athens with Libanius during the later 330s;¹⁶³ if so, then he too was about fifteen or twenty years older than Julian. Sozomenus served as governor of Lycia; his brother Nicocles had been one of Julian’s teachers at Constantinople in the later 340s.¹⁶⁴

Procopius was a native of Cilicia who served as a *comes* and a military commander. He was a relative of Julian and a few years older. In anticipation of unforeseen misfortune during his invasion of the Persian empire, Julian even designated Procopius as his successor.¹⁶⁵ Procopius in turn relied upon the support of Marcellus, a *protector* (junior officer) in the army. As Marcellus was a relative of Procopius, he was also a distant relative of Julian.¹⁶⁶ If Julian’s reign had not ended so abruptly, Procopius and Marcellus would have represented the next generation of loyal family members and supporters in the East.

Julian characterized himself as a Greek emperor. But since his ancestry represented two distinct families, he also had a network of family supporters in the West through his father’s connections at Rome. In late 361 Julian appointed as prefect of Rome Maximus, who was a nephew of Galla, the first wife of Julius Constantius. Galla’s brothers had already held high offices under Constantine and his sons. Vulcacius Rufinus had served three tenures as praetorian prefect in Italy, Illyricum, and Gaul, and he had been an ordinary consul in 347.¹⁶⁷ Naeratius Cerealis had served as prefect in charge of the grain supply at Rome, prefect of Rome, and an ordinary consul in 358.¹⁶⁸ The abiding influence of their family at Rome may have motivated Julian to snub a more distinguished senator by appointing his relative Maximus as prefect of Rome. During his prefecture Maximus was able to ensure adequate supplies of food for the capital, successfully dealing with exactly the problem that Julian had faced a few years earlier.¹⁶⁹ His advantage, of course, was having his relative as sole emperor. Even though Julian was amassing supplies for his military campaign in the East, he presumably still guaranteed the supply of Egyptian grain

158 Julian, *Ep.* 29.

159 *PLRE* 1:470–71, “Julianus 12.”

160 For the creation of the separate diocese of Egypt in 370, see Lenski, *Failure of Empire* (n. 111 above), 280.

161 In 363 Salutius cited his old age as the reason for declining the invitation to succeed Julian as emperor (Ammianus Marcellinus, *Res gestae* 25.5.3).

162 Libanius, *Ep.* 35.4, with *PLRE* 1:415, “Helpidius 6.”

163 Libanius, *Ep.* 147, with *PLRE* 1:647–48, “Ecdicius Olympus 3.”

164 Libanius, *Orat.* 15.27, with *PLRE* 1:630, “Nicocles”; 850, “Sozomenus”; and Kaster, *Guardians of Language* (n. 129 above), 317–21, clarifying the chronology.

165 Ammianus Marcellinus, *Res gestae* 23.3.2, relative, 26.6.1, Cilicia, 18, “relationship with imperial lineage,” with *PLRE* 1:742–43, “Procopius 4.” Procopius was related presumably through Julian’s mother’s family, but for the (dubious) possibility that he was a descendant of one of Constantine’s half-sisters, see Chausson, *Stemmata aurea* (n. 21 above), 146–50.

166 Ammianus Marcellinus, *Res gestae* 26.10.1, with *PLRE* 1:551, “Marcellus 5.”

167 *PLRE* 1:782–83, “Vulcacius Rufinus 25.”

168 *PLRE* 1:197–98, “Naeratius Cerealis 2.”

169 Ammianus Marcellinus, *Res gestae* 21.12.24, complaining that Julian overlooked L. Aurelius Avianius Symmachus, with *PLRE* 1:582, “Maximus 17.”

to Rome. Julian could hence rely upon connections in the East through his grandfather's family and in the West through his father's family.


The durable legacy of Julius Constantius is one of the unexpectedly ironic outcomes of the reign of Constantine. Although he had been excluded from imperial rule by being passed over in 306 and executed in 337, his children and relatives became prominent. The brothers of both of his wives held high offices. His daughter married the emperor Constantius II, and two of his sons married daughters of Constantine and became emperors.¹⁷⁰

Constantine had sanctioned the marriages of his half-brother Julius Constantius in order to expand his

own networks of supporters, first in the West, then in the East. In the future, however, those marriages would help Julian to consolidate his brief emperorship. Julian was not only the last "Constantinian" emperor; he was also a "Julianic" emperor. For the making of Julian as an emperor, the ancestors who were most consequential turned out to be his Julianic grandfather Julius Julianus and his Constantinian father, Julius Constantius.

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170 See Chausson, *Stemmata aurea* (n. 21 above), 154–69, for speculation about Julius Constantius's imperial descendants into the sixth century.

 FOR COMMENTS AND ADVICE, MY THANKS TO Anthony Kaldellis, Joel Kalvesmaki, and the anonymous readers for the journal. Unless otherwise noted, all translations are my own.